Hafa Adai!

Man allegedly chokes wife after she refused to help look for bananas. PAGE 3

13 'Gandang Pinay' bets undergo pageant boot camp. PAGE 6

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Another 10-cent price rollback

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With the holidays right around the corner, people on Saipan were surprised with yet another rollback in fuel prices yesterday, with oil companies dropping prices by 10 cents.

The year 2022 is shaping up to be a relatively good year in terms of gas prices with fuel prices lower than ever compared to the previous years when CNMI consumers were slapped with back-to-back fuel hikes.

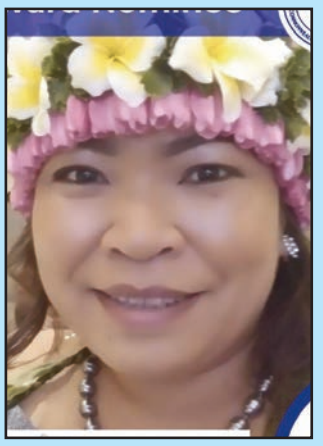
As of yesterday, Mobil Oil Marianas now charges 10-cents less for all their fuel. Shell Marianas is expected to follow suit today.

With this rollback, Mobil now charges $4.96 per gallon of its Extra Fuel from $5.06.

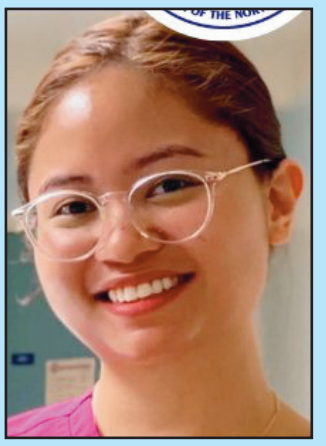
See ROLLBACK on Page 3

CHCC names 10 DAISY award nominees

Awitan


Kawaii

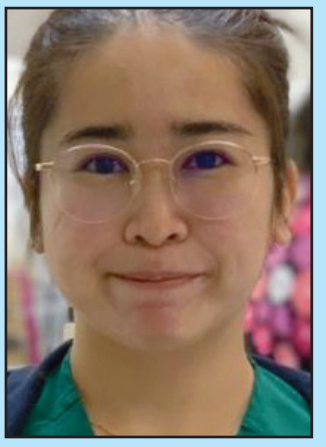
Figueroa


Gatchalian

Crisostomo

Cultura

Lu


Indalecio

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Out of dozens of qualified nurses within the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., CHCC has finally chosen 10 nominees for consideration for the 2022-2023 edition of the DAISY Award, which seeks to honor extraordinary nurses.

CHCC announced last Wednesday its nominees for the Daisy Foundation award recipients—10 Commonwealth Health Center nurses with extensive experience in their respective fields. DAISY stands for Diseases Attacking the Immune System Foundation, better known as the Daisy Foundation.

CHCC's nominees for the award are:

■ Daisy Jane Awitan, RN - Medical-Surgical;

■ Angela Figueroa, RN

See CHCC on Page 4

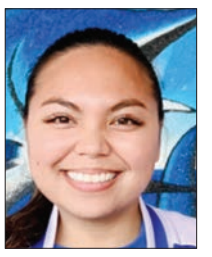
Lizama

Asuncion

GCEA's Christmas Decorating Contest promotes holiday cheer in all schools and businesses

TOGETHER, WE CAN

By TRINA SANTOS
Special to the Saipan Tribune



Trina Santos, a counselor at Kagman Elementary School, was named School-Level Counselor of the Year in 2022. Santos is the Marianas School Pride adviser at KagES, and she leads a team of six Marianas School Pride Ambassadors.

Every Christmas, I look forward to seeing and hearing about the Christmas spirit in the community. Villages illuminated with holiday lights and cheerful music playing throughout the month of December bring me immense joy. One of my favorite aspects of Christmas is experiencing a

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS

See TOGETHER on Page 4

INSIDE

LOCAL
On deck at the Hyatt Regency Saipan tonight is Marianas High School's "Rhythm 'N Harmony."

PAGE 12

OFF THE WALL
Nazaa'a has won a camel beauty pageant, which is among the World Cup's side attractions in Qatar.

PAGE 17

LIFE & STYLE
Chinese artist Ai Weiwei doesn't see the protests in China bringing about any political change.

PAGE 19

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

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Local

‘Growing surfing community in NMI should be supported’

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Sheila J. Babauta (D-Saipan), who chairs the Natural Resources Committee in the House of Representatives, has noted a growing number of surfers in the community and she encouraged lawmakers to support them.

Babauta shared during a House session last week that the first ever surfing competition in the CNMI is happening on Saipan this Saturday and Sunday at the Obyan Beach from 9am to 4pm.

“It’s a collaborative effort. I think it’s something new that’s being organized, but there has been a growing surfing community,” she said.

Babauta encouraged her fellow House representatives to be at the event as a show of support for members of the community who are close to nature and the ocean. “That’s a really important part of our quality of life here,” she added.

This weekend’s event, dubbed as “Boogie Down at Obyan,” will see 16 of the best bodyboarders in the Marianas compete. The organizing committee includes venue director Joe Villacrusis, tournament director Edward Manibusan, and beach marshal David Cabrera.

IRP helps with over 60 archaeological reports for NMHC housing projects

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Infrastructure and Recovery Program has been assisting stakeholders in completing over 60 archaeological reports for the Northern Marianas Housing Corp.’s U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-funded housing projects to provide new housing construction or repairs to qualified applicants, according to IRP then-acting coordinator Mariano Iglecias.

In his IRP 2022 Citizen-Centric Report, Iglecias also disclosed that they have been assisting the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. with all project permitting needs to provide CNMI citizens with more resilient, reliable water, and wastewater infrastructure.

He said they have been assisting stakeholders with over 40 federally-funded government projects to include streamlining permitting needs for the Oleai Sports Complex for the 2022 Pacific Mini Games.

Iglecias said IRP has been able to provide opportunities for 270 local participants to receive disaster recovery and project permitting training in collaboration with the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Joint Recovery Office.

“IRP has made some noteworthy accomplishments over this past year,” he said.

Iglecias said IRP has become heavily incolved in the progress of these projects and have established strong working relationships with stakeholders and permitting agencies.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres created the IRP in May 2021 to streamline the process and expedite federally-funded projects worth nearly a billion dollars for different government agencies.

Marianne Concepcion-Teregeyo is the IRP’s coordinator.

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Man allegedly chokes wife after she refused to help look for bananas

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a $10,000 cash bail on a man accused of strangling his wife and manhandling her after she allegedly refused to follow him look for bananas at Obyan Beach in the dead of night.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho imposed last Tuesday a $10,000 cash bail on Venusto Mangarero, a man accused of strangling his wife over bananas.

Mangarero, 66, is currently facing charges of assault and battery, strangulation, and disturbing the peace.

Following the hearing, the judge remanded Mangarero back to Department of Corrections custody after he failed to post bail. The defendant was ordered to return to court for a preliminary hearing on Dec. 14, while his arraignment was set for Dec. 19.

According to court documents, at around 3:55am on Dec. 3, the Department of Public Safety received a call from a witness who reported a woman yelling for help in a white Toyota Tacoma behind the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport.

DPS immediately sent out an advisory to all police units to be on the lookout for the vehicle described by the caller. At 4:03am, police located the vehicle in a parking lot of a supermarket in Chalan Piao.

Police noted that Mangarero was seated on the driver side of the truck without a shirt while a woman sat in the front passenger seat appearing emotionally distressed and was avoiding eye contact.

After the officer asked Mangarero if they were okay, he told the officer they were and proceeded to enter the supermarket. With Mangarero gone, the officer asked the woman if she were okay, to which she replied in a shaky voice that Mangarero took her to the "woods" to choke her. When the defendant returned, he was placed under arrest.

Officers also noted that when the victim tried to walk, they saw that she had difficulty putting pressure on her right foot, had a rash on her neck, and blood underneath her right thumb. She claims that Mangarero hurt her foot with the vehicle door and choked her with both his hands, so she scratched his face.

She told another officer that Mangarero accused her of having an affair and hiding his phone from him, adding that she almost blacked out when Mangarero choked her.

Meanwhile, Mangarero told police that he and his wife had gone to Obyan Beach to look for bananas. When they got there, he said she asked him why he took her there before trying to get out of the truck.

He said he told his wife not to get out of the truck because it was dark, but she was not listening. So, he said he roughly pushed his wife feet into the truck, grabbed her neck with both hands, pushed her into the truck, and told her to stop it. He said they then went to the supermarket.

SCC to host 2022 Christmas Feast on Sunday

In celebration of its 75th year, Saipan Community Church will be having its 2022 Christmas Feast this Sunday, Dec. 11, from 5pm to 8pm and will have live performances, including an "Everlasting Light" Cantata.

SCC senior pastor Stephen Dame said the 2022 Christmas Feast is the church's gift to the community this Christmas.

"Due to COVID-19, it has been three long years since we have gotten to offer this celebration to our community. The 2022 Christmas Feast is a celebration of food, culture, and, of course, the birth of Jesus. I'm not exactly sure how far back this tradition goes, but I know it has been in existence for much of Saipan Community Church's 75 years here on the island," he said.

Dame invites everyone to the feast. "All the food and all the programming is free! There will be local food favorites as well as cultural dishes. As for the entertainment, the Saipan Community Church Choir will be performing part of their Christmas Cantata. The Saipan Community School will also be showing off some of its talent and a local glee club will also take the stage. This will be my first Christmas feast and I am looking forward to it! Please be our guest!" he said.

The Saipan Community Church is located along Beach Road across from the Mobil gas station in Susupe. ***(PR)***

ROLLBACK

From Page 1

Supreme Fuel also saw a rollback from $5.51 per gallon to $5.41 while diesel saw a bigger drop from $6.28 to $6.08 per gallon.

According to a 28-year-old woman who requested anonymity, it's looking like this year will close off with low gas prices compared to the previous ones.

See ROLLBACK on Next Page

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‘List shows 241 recipients of BOOST Program’

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) disclosed yesterday that, based on the list submitted by Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig, 241 have been awarded funds under the Torres administration’s Building Optimism, Opportunity and Stability Together, or BOOST Program.

In response to *Saipan Tribune*’s inquiry, Babauta, who chairs the House of Representatives Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations, said that Atalig replied to their subpoena and that they received from him a list of 241 recipients of the BOOST Program.

As to the question of how many applicants are still pending or have not received any response yet whether their application had been approved or denied, Babauta said that, according to the Finance secretary, all 241 have been awarded.

“At this time, we are unable to disclose any information because we have not vetted any witness testimony,” Babauta said.

She said she did not calculate yet as to the total amount awarded to the recipients.

Atalig told *Saipan Tribune* Wednesday that he did submit to the House Committee on JGO and Committee on Ways and Means a letter responding to the BOOST questions that the committees had requested in their subpoena.

Babauta

Atalig said he is not aware of anyone questioning the House’s authority.

The committees’ joint meeting set for Dec. 16 and 19 about the BOOST Program includes, among other items, contempt and a review of legal authority to conduct a legislative research or investigation.

Atalig and William “Wil” Castro, who is the chief of staff of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, were among several persons and entities that the committees served with subpoena to compel them to produce documents and testify related to the administration of the BOOST Program.

The Torres administration previously disclosed that $10 million in the American Rescue Plan Act funding has been allocated for the BOOST Program to help small businesses in the CNMI.

BOOST is project of the Office of the Governor and the Department of Finance that aims to provide loan assistance to CNMI businesses and non-profit organizations.

CHCC

From Page 1

– Oncology
- Lahaina Gatchalian, RN – OB Nursery
- Evita Kawaii, RN – CQPM
- Mila Cultura, RN - Women’s Clinic
- Crisostomo, LPN - Family Care Clinic
- Rose Indalecio, RN - Children’s Clinic
- Ritchie Asuncion, RN – Dialysis,
- Windy Lu, CNA - Medical Surgical; and
- Xiu Zhen Lizama, RN – OB Nursery

According to one of the nominees, Windy Lu, although she is only a nominee, to be part of the Top 10 in the CNMI means the world to her.

“Technically, I’m only a nominee, but to be amongst the Top 10 nominees at CHCC when there are countless nurses who are also deserving and worthy makes me feel so proud and determined to learn more and improve,” she said.

Lu said the recognition by CHCC in itself means a lot to her and she looks forward to the actual awarding.

“This award means a lot to me. I’ve had countless patients and co-workers telling me in the past that I’m doing a good job but this is the first actual formal recognition that I have ever received in regards to my work at CHCC,” she said.

Nominee Daisy Awitan said in a statement that the nomination was utterly unexpected. “This nomination is unexpected, when I perform my duties as a nurse, my focus is for the welfare of my patients. That is why this is a surprise for me,” she said.

Despite her shock and the overwhelming feeling of being a nominee, she is honored to be a recognized by CHCC.

“I feel honored to be nominated, and at the same time overwhelmed. I am grateful for the trust and confidence of my co-workers for recognizing my service. Foremost I thank God for the opportunity to work at CHCC and to work with an amazing team,” Awitan said.

According to CHCC’s post on social media, it has been accepting nominations for over two months now and has finally narrowed their search to their Top 10 nominees.

“Since Oct. 3, we have been accepting nominations of extraordinary nurses within the CHCC in consideration to be a recipient of the DAISY Award. The nominations have been received and we are proud to announce the Top 10 nominees for the first DAISY Award,” the post stated.

The DAISY Foundation, formed in November 1999, honors nurses in all practices and all roles, and celebrates the compassion they provide their patients every day.

“The DAISY Foundation believes that the DAISY awards is important, given the growing importance of delivering high quality healthcare nationwide. The DAISY Award for Nursing Faculty is helping to lift those nurses who educate and nurture future nurses and those advancing their expertise,” the DAISY Foundation website states.

DAISY Foundation awardees are given a scholarship to further advance in their field of choice.

The DAISY Award will be awarded four times in a year. To learn more about the DAISY Award, visit https://www.daisyfoundation.org/

ROLLBACK

From Page 3

“I remember when we were just getting out of the pandemic and the international conflict began, fuel was extremely expensive. I think we hit the $7 mark and we saw increases almost every week. Now, seeing prices at $4, I can’t help but think that this year is going to end at $4,” she said.

Another motorist said that it’s refreshing to see fuel prices back at $4.

“Gas was crazy expensive last year, and it was even worse for our neighboring islands of Tinian and Rota. I remember when I couldn’t make $20 last a week because of how expensive it had gotten. Now, at $4, this is refreshing. Better gas now,” he said.

Meanwhile, a 36-year-old government employee hopes that utility prices will follow suit.

“Now if only [the Commonwealth Utilities Corpo.] would follow the trend and lower their charges. They didn’t hesitate to increase what they charged us when gas went up. Now that the price for fuel has dropped exponentially, they are hesitant to drop it. I just hope they follow the trend,” she said.

For months, the CNMI saw a string of rollbacks, but that streak was broken last Oct. 11 with a 10-cent increase when oil companies raised prices from $5.16 to $5.26 per gallon of regular fuel.

TOGETHER

From Page 1

sense of togetherness in the community. Collectively, they make Christmas the most wonderful time of the year.

Last year, the Kagman Elementary School won the Marianas Village Pride Campaign’s Christmas Decorating Contest. The contest was judged on four criteria: beautification, creativity, festive, and bonus for using recycled material.

With this in mind, each of our KagES team members contributed greatly to the experience. They thought of little details like using recycled materials to make wreaths, giant present boxes, and gingerbread men to make it extra special. The addition of colorful Christmas lights to the front courtyard added to the festive spirit we wanted to emphasize at night. I’d say our inspiration was to highlight a huge Christmas tree right in front of the Main Office with a four-point star so that our students could see our Christmas spirit as soon as they entered our campus.

We were thrilled when we were told that KagES had won the Christmas Decorating contest because the prize was a $1,000 gift certificate to All Star Sporting Goods! With the coaches’ help, we were able to identify the supplies and sports equipment that the team lacked. We then purchased brand-new sports equipment for our students so that they would be better prepared to participate in the Public School System’s co-ed athletic program.

Marianas School Pride Christmas Decorating Contest

The momentum of winning last year’s contest and understanding the benefits for the students are propelling us to participate in this year’s Marianas School Pride Christmas Decorating Contest. As the criteria stay the same, we decided to stay true to our Blue Marlin spirit with a beachy Christmas theme, incorporating the use of materials washed up on our Kagman beaches. In October, a group of our students participated in a beach cleanup and found materials such as rope, driftwood, and buoys, which we turned into Christmas decorations. Our main goal is to show students that they can be creative during the holiday season by using natural and recycled materials. The results are festive and good for the environment.

If our school wins the Most Festive School Contest this year, we intend to reward our participants with gifts as a token of our gratitude for their dedication and hard work. We have been blessed with students who are eager to participate in activities outside of the classroom and are passionate about sharing their Christmas spirit with others.

Making memorable experiences throughout their elementary school years is critical to helping them stay motivated as they work toward graduation from high school. Staying spirited during the holidays may be one way they are reminded that they are loved and cherished, especially at this time of year.

I highly encourage all schools and businesses to participate in the Christmas Decorating Contest. The holiday season is a time for people to come together to spread joy and the Christmas spirit, and participating in the Christmas Decorating Contest allows students, team members, and the community to be a part of spreading and receiving the holiday spirit.

Together, We Can!

For more information visit the GCEA website at cnmieconomy.com. Engage with the Council on Facebook and Instagram (@cnmigov.economy) or contact them at gceacnmi@gmail.com.

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Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator

Richard V.Salas
Director, DCRM

MEETING OF THE CRM AGENCY OFFICIALS

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios through the Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) hereby give notice that a CRM Agency Officials meeting will be held on ***Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 10:00AM*** at the DCRM Learning Center, Suite 301, Gualo Rai Center II, on Chalan Pale Arnold Road in Lower Gualo Rai, Saipan.

To minimize the threat of COVID-19 and to ensure the health and safety of all, virtual public participation will continue and encouraged via video conferencing through Zoom link: hhtps://zoom.us/j (Meeting ID: 6706648315) or join via telephone by calling the DCRM office at (670) 664-8300 for connection assistance and most updated information as Zoom meeting access code may change.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda
D. Adoption of October 27, 2022 Meeting Minutes
II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
III. PERMIT APPLICATION REVIEW
1) CRM Permit Application No. CRM-MS2022-0001 (formerly SMS-2022-062)
Project: PHASES III and IV OF RT.33 BEACH ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
Applicant: DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
The Department of Public Works (DPW) is proposing to commence the Phase III and Phase IV of Route 33 Beach Road Improvement Project. Phase III road construction will begin at the Route 33/Route 31 Intersection in Oleai-Chalan laolao and end at the Angaha Street and the Phase IV construction will commence at Angaha Street and end at Micro Beach Road and American Memorial Park (AMP) Intersection (Route 33/Route 38 Intersection) in North Garapan, Saipan
a. Agencies’ Discussion
b. Agencies’ Final Determination
IV. OTHER MATTERS
1) Final adoption of proposed amendments to NMIAC Chapter 15-10 to revise DCRM’s Permitting Fees
2) Authorization for DCRM Director to promulgate final regulation
V. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and submit written or oral testimony regarding the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session).

/s/ RICHARD V. SALAS
Director, DCRM

Hearing set on Sablan's appointment to CEC board

The Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations has set a public hearing this Wednesday, Dec. 14, for the appointment of former special assistant for Women's Affairs Remedio Reyes Sablan to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Election Commission representing the Third Senatorial District, or Saipan and the Northern Islands.

EAGI Committee chair Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian) said in a notice Wednesday that they will convene the public hearing to hear and review Sablan's credentials in the Senate chamber at 9:30am.

Cruz requested several witnesses, including Saipan Mayor and lieutenant governor-elect David M. Apatang, to be present and may provide comments during the public hearing.

Also invited as witnesses are representative from the Governor's Office, members of the Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council, CEC executive director Kayla S. Igitol, and CEC members. All private citizens are also invited to come and testify.

To ensure written testimonies are properly received by the committee, Cruz said that members of the public shall submit their written testimony no later than 5pm of the scheduled public hearing date. Any written testimony sent via email may be sent to Jolyn B. Duenas-Tagabuel, senior legislative assistant, at tagabuelj.la@gmail.com.

The senator said anyone who wishes to present oral testimony is encouraged to inform his office no later than 24 hours prior to the public hearing.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres appointed the 71-year-old Sablan last Nov. 29. The appointment requires the advice and consent of the Senate. If confirmed, Sablan will serve a four-year term, which will expire on July 21, 2025.

The CEC currently has seven board members. Five commissioners are needed to have a quorum.

Jesus I. Sablan, 74, who has chaired the CEC board since 2018, has disclosed that he will soon resign due to health reasons. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Notice to all weightlifters

All weightlifters and persons interested in weightlifting are informed that the Northern Marianas Cup Weightlifting Tournament will be held on Saturday, Jan. 7, 2023, at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

There is no entry fee for members of CNMI Weightlifting but non-members will have to pay $20. Entry forms may be obtained from CNMI Weightlifting secretary Jeanne Rayphand at the NMPASI Office, Gualo Rai, Saipan.

Entries must be received by CNMI Weightlifting on or before Dec. 31, 2022.

For more information, call Rayphand at (670) 287-9807 or (670) 235-7273. ***(PR)***

4.6-magnitude quake on Rota

At 12:59am on Dec. 8, 2022, a report of a 4.6-magnitude earthquake occurred 14.133°N 145.076°E on Rota in the Northern Marianas Islands region. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories that were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 670-237-8000. ***Z(PR)***

Rip currents may continue until Sunday afternoon

The public is being warned that there is a high risk of dangerous rip currents through Sunday afternoon in east facing reefs of the Marianas. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, a surge in longer-period trade-wind swell this weekend could prolong the high risk of rip currents beyond Friday afternoon and into the weekend.

It was earlier predicted that the rip current could last only until Friday.

The public is being advised to swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. ***(PR)***

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
DPW23-ITB NO. 42300024

SUBMISSION DATE: JANUARY 09, 2023 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

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COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT HORIGUCHI BLDG, GROUND FLOOR, 123 KOPPA DI ORU & BEACH ROAD, GARAPAN, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****FOR YOUR SAFETY & OURS: ALL INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK UPON ENTRY****

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO THE SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS, JAMES A. ADA AT (670) 234-9828

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

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/S/ JAMES A. ADA
SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P.S.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP23-CHCC/CGC-ZERO SUICIDE PROGRAM-004

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: DEC 23RD, 2022 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

"PROGRAM EVALUATION MONITORING, COMPLIANCE AND DATA COLLECTION"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.HEALTH]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP23-CHCC/FACILITY-002

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: JAN. 3rd 2023 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

"WATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES FOR THE HOSPITAL AND HEMODIALYSIS"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.HEALTH]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB OF THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

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/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
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13 'Gandang Pinay' bets undergo pageant boot camp

The 13 candidates of the "Gandang Pinay" beauty pageant, who will compete for the crown on Feb. 11, 2023, at the Saipan World Resort.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Bayani Association, which recently staged the blockbuster "Drag Queen 2022," will be hosting the "Gandang Pinay" beauty pageant on Feb. 11, 2023, at the Saipan World Resort.

In preparation for the pageant, the 13 candidates went through boot camp training last Sunday, Dec. 4, 2022, at the conference room of the Ada Gymnasium.

The training modules were conducted by well-known personalities and beauty queens on the island. The one on "First Impression" was presented by Miss Northern Marianas Earth 2020 Maria Lael Terlaje, with the national director for Stellar Marianas from 2014-2019, Crispin "Ping" Deleon Guerrero.

The candidates had hands-on tutorial during the make-up and hairstyling session, conducted by make-up artists Venus Grino, Girlie Attao, and Drag Queen 2022 Shine Vizcarra Robin.

The "Talk" module was presented by the co-founder and vice president of the Miss Earth Northern Marianas beauty pageant, Rosalyn Ajoste.

The "Personality" module was conducted by the former Miss Northern Marianas Water 2020, Zoe Stephanson, who is also a registered nurse.

The program coordinator of the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, Grace Veleña, presented on raising awareness of domestic abuse, family violence, and sexual assault.

The "Fashion Style" was presented by the president and CEO of FM Corp., Bench Legaspi, who is also the owner of the House of Beautiful Creation by Bench Legaspi, during which he tackled wardrobe, essentials on what not to wear, accessories, footwear, and pageant attire.

Photography is always part of any pageant and candidates have a chance to learn how to project and pose in front of a camera, and this topic was handled by freelance photographer Myla Deets, who is the owner of MyCaptures.

The pageant's choreographer and director, Ernie Molina, presented "The Walk" module, which teaches the candidates the pageant walk, pageant poses, and others. The training lasted seven hours.

The candidates' names are Jane Nicole C. Mozunder, Fyema Janelle C. Pelaez, Alianna Layne Q. Sublemente, Sophia Michelle Cornelio, Keth Kat D. Soriano, Angelica May Aquino, Stephanie F. Dela Cruz, Steffanie Nicole Hann L. Marquez, Angela Marie B. Maratas, Bernice Shane Q. Sabino, Kriselle Bryana Mitzy A. Drilon, Elizah Mae A. Canlas, and Trisha Jindra T. Rivera.

The Bayani Association is grateful to Cecile Obando of Blu Haus for the giveaways for the 13 candidates, and to Savory, D'Elegance Café, Shirley's Coffee Shop, Gold Ribbon, and Shirley Wilson Catering for the lunch for the candidates, parents, guests, and volunteers.

All presenters received certificates of recognition for their valuable time and support.

Association president Annamae Adaza also gave special thanks and appreciation to all parents "who are supportive of our candidates. For sure, even they learned something from the training."

If you wish to sponsor the pageant, call Adaza at (670) 285-4388, vice president Yolanda De Ramos at (670) 484-7836, treasurer Ladyvir Canape at (670) 989-2545, or Molina at (670) 789-8212. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority
Office of the Governor
"Driving You Forward"

PUBLIC NOTICE

Please be advised that the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority's (COTA) Call-A-Ride Saipan Demand Responsive Shared Ride Services inclusive of COTA's Administrative office will be closed on the following day for Professional Development

Monday, December 12, 2022

COTA's Operational and Administrative hours will resume on **Tuesday, December 13, 2022.** We would like to remind our community to plan their trips accordingly. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Sincerely,
/s/ ***Alfreda Camacho Maratita***
Special Assistant
for Public Transportation

Community Transportation Association · APTA · Easter Seals Project ACTION · National RTAP Rural Transit Assistance Program

COTA Administrative Building and Maintenance Facility. 12841 Lower Base Dr. Saipan
Caller Box 10007; Saipan MP 96950; (670) 664-2682; alfredac.maratita@gov.mp;
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COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

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WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIPORTS.COM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SERVICES (NON-RESTRICTED AREAS)
PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-003-23

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting sealed proposals for grounds maintenance services of the Tinian International Airport on the Island of Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Proposal Package will be available at the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, 2nd Floor of the Arrival Building beginning December 02, 2022.

All proposals shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: "Proposal for Grounds Maintenance Services (Non-Restricted Areas) of the Tinian International Airport, Project No-CPA-RFP-003-23". One original and two (2) copies of the proposal must be submitted no later than 2:00 P.M. LOCAL TIME, December 19, 2022, to the Office of the Executive Director at the Saipan International Airport. Proposals received after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstances.

There will be a Mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference on December 12, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. at the CPA Conference Room of the Tinian International Airport. Site Visit will be conducted shortly after the meeting. Only those proposers who attended this meeting will be allowed to submit their proposals.

Written questions and/or clarifications regarding this project will be entertained up till December 13, 2022.

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this RFP; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding proposal rejection or cancellation; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding this project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA, CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest.

All proposals shall become the property of CPA.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

COMMONWEALTH LAW REVISION COMMISSION
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS JUDICIARY
House of Justice • Guma Hustisia • Imwal Aweewe
JCT Bldg. Unit 6, Safto St. Susupe
P.O. Box 502179, Saipan, MP 96950-2179
Tel: (670)235-9820 / (670)236-9820 W.cnmilaw.gov E.cnmilaw@nmijudiciary.com

REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, December 13, 2022, 11:00 a.m.
Commonwealth Law Revision Commission
JCT Building II, Unit 6
Susupe, Saipan

AGENDA

1. Preliminary Matters
   a. Call to Order and Roll Call
   b. Proof of Notice of Meeting
   c. Review and Approval of Minutes of April 14, 2022 Regular Meeting
2. Reports of the Executive Director and Committees
   a. Office & Staff Update
      i. New Staff and Temporary Relocation Update
      ii. Outreach, Training, and Travel
   b. Publications & Website: Status, Issues, & Plans
      i. Supreme Court Opinions, Superior Court Orders, NMI Reporter
      ii. CMC
      iii. NMIAC
      iv. Driver's Handbook
   c. Miscellaneous Projects
   d. Sales and Other Reports
   e. FY 2023 Budget
3. Unfinished Business
   a. Proposed response to communication 2021-4-27 (R. Hofschneider)
4. New Business
5. Public Comment
6. Place and Date of Next Meeting
7. Other Matters

USCG engages with Pohnpei communities after COVID hiatus

POHNPEI, FSM—As part of Operation Rematau, the crew of the U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Frederick Hatch* conducted community engagements in Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia from Nov. 20 to 24, 2022.

"We appreciate the support of the U.S. Embassy team and the Australian Maritime Advisors to make our visit a success," said Lt. Patrick Dreiss, commanding officer of *Frederick Hatch*. "Coming into these islands and doing community relations is a lot of fun. It might seem like work, but especially when the local high schoolers come aboard, it is exciting to show off the ship and see how much they enjoy seeing the different capabilities and the cool things our ship can do. It's fun to watch our crewmembers get the chance to show the vessel to them also."

U.S. COAST GUARD/CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER SARA MUIR

Seaman Paula Betancourt of the USCGC *Frederick Hatch* (WPC 1143) talks about the U.S. Coast Guard with students from Pohnpei Catholic School at the pier in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, on Nov. 22, 2022.

The crew hosted visits from more than 80 senior students at Pohnpei Catholic School and the Cavalry Christian Academy, colleagues from the U.S. Navy Seabee detachment in Pohnpei, embassy staff and families, and members of the FSM National Police Maritime Wing. They also took time to experience local food and culture, dive, hike the waterfalls, and visit the ancient ruins of Nan Madol, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

"While playing the Seabee detachment at the softball field in town, an impromptu game between the Americans and a local high school team broke out with a considerable crowd gathering to watch," said Dreiss. "We're calling out the Seabees on our team for the narrow 10-9 loss. But seriously, it was a great event for all."

The community events are part of a more extensive regional patrol. The *Frederick Hatch* crew also conducted six at-sea boardings of fishing vessels with an FSM shiprider aboard. No major violations of applicable regulations were noted during the boardings. This activity was the first time in several years an FSM shiprider could accompany U.S. Coast Guard crews as the country resumes normal operations after limiting travel as a COVID precaution.

"We had a fisheries officer from the FSM Maritime National Police conduct boardings on vessels in the FSM exclusive economic zone. It's a great opportunity to swap stories and learn from each other, like how they view the issues we are trying to tackle when it comes to illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. It's a great chance to strengthen our bond with our allies and regional partners. We would like to thank Mr. Perry Tewasmal, our FSM shiprider, for coming aboard and being a *Frederick Hatch* crewmember," Dreiss said.

The *Frederick Hatch*'s arrival to Pohnpei was ahead of schedule as they executed a medical evacuation of a 31-year-old Vietnamese fisherman from the Nauru-flagged, 69.4-meter (227-foot) purse seiner fishing vessel, *Ocean Galaxy* 195 nautical miles (224 statute miles) south of Pohnpei.

"It was an absolute team effort by every member of *Frederick Hatch* to medevac the injured crewmember from the *Ocean Galaxy* successfully. Witnessing each crewmember perform at the highest level after completing two boardings earlier the same day to help a fellow mariner was awesome to watch," said Dreiss.

The fisherman reportedly fell 12 feet earlier the same day, sustaining a head and possible spinal injury. He was conscious and talking but lost feeling and motion in his right arm and both legs, exhibiting severe concussion symptoms. The *Frederick Hatch* crew completed the transit to Pohnpei in about eight hours to arrive around midnight. They then transferred the injured fisherman to awaiting emergency medical services, who took him to the local hospital. The embarked hospital corpsman and linguist accompanied the fisherman to pass on relevant medical details and ensure hospital staff could communicate with him.

The *Frederick Hatch* is on an expeditionary patrol in Oceania in support of Operation Rematau and Operation Blue Pacific to promote security, safety, sovereignty, and economic prosperity in Oceania. In Micronesia, Rematau means people of the deep sea. It highlights the connection between mariners and honors the shared understanding in the Pacific that securing the future requires long-term vision and a carefully considered regional strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

The *Frederick Hatch* is the 43rd 154-foot Sentinel-class fast response cutter named for a surfman and lighthouse keeper who was a two-time Gold Life Saving Medal recipient. The Service commissioned the ship along with its sister ships, *Myrtle Hazard* (WPC 1139) and *Oliver Henry* (WPC 1140), in Guam in July 2021. These cutters are a vital part of the U.S. Coast Guard's enduring regional presence serving the people of the Pacific by conducting 10 of the Service's 11 statutory missions with a focus on search and rescue, defense readiness, living marine resources protection, and ensuring commerce through marine safety and ports, waterways, and coastal security. ***(USCG)***

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ., F-0122
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ATTORNEY FOR Petitioner

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Estate of IAN SHALMAR DELEON GUERRERO, Deceased.	:	**CIVIL ACTION NO. 22-0270**

NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Kimberly Jean Rios Deleon Guerrero has filed a Petition for Letters of Administration upon the Estate of Ian Shalmar Deleon Guerrero, deceased; and that the said Petition will be heard by the Court on January 12, 2023, at the hour of 10:00 a.m.

Notice is also given to all heirs of and persons having claims against the Estate of Ian Shalmar Deleon Guerrero, deceased, and to all persons claiming an interest in said Estate, that they shall file such claims with the Clerk of this Court within sixty (60) days from the first publication of this Notice. Copies of such claims should be provided to Michael A. White, Esq., The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, P.O. Box 5222 CHRB, Saipan, MP 96950, Attorney for Petitioner. All claims not so filed shall be forever barred.

DATED: December 6, 2022

/s/
JOSEPH N. CAMACHO, Associate Judge

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 501055•SAIPAN•MP•96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIPORTS.COM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SERVICES (NON-RESTRICTED AREAS)

PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-004-23

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting sealed proposals for grounds maintenance services of the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona Rota International Airport on the Island of Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Proposal Package will be available at the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, 2nd Floor of the Arrival Building beginning December 02, 2022.

All proposals shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: "Proposal for Grounds Maintenance Services (Non-Restricted Areas) of the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona Rota International Airport, Project No-CPA-RFP-004-23". One original and two (2) copies of the proposal must be submitted no later than 2:00 P.M. LOCAL TIME, December 19, 2022, to the Office of the Executive Director at the Saipan International Airport. Proposals received after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstances.

There will be a Mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference on December 13, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. at the BTM Rota International Airport. Site Visit will be conducted shortly after the meeting. Only those proposers who attended this meeting will be allowed to submit their proposals.

Written questions and/or clarifications regarding this project will be entertained up till December 14, 2022.

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this RFP; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding proposal rejection or cancellation; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding this project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA, CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest.

All proposals shall become the property of CPA.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Another bite at the rotten apple: SCOTUS should reject anti-gay designer's arguments

The Supreme Court yesterday heard arguments over whether business owners can refuse service to LGBT couples based on their religious objections to the would-be customers' marriage. If you're getting déjà vu, it might be because that circumstance played already, exactly five years before to the day, when the court heard arguments in a case involving gay couple David Mullins and Charlie Craig being turned away from the Colorado's Masterpiece Cakeshop after trying to order a wedding cake.

The justices split 7-2 on the narrow ruling that a Colorado law had violated cakemaker Jack Phillips' rights, but did not address the more complex legal question of whether a business has a First Amendment right to refuse to create specific products for clients whose conduct they find morally or religiously objectionable. That lack of clarity has now come back to haunt us in this instant case, brought by graphic designer Lorie Smith, also of Colorado, who wants to refuse LGBT clients' requests for wedding websites.

It comes at a different and more dangerous time. Armed and fatigue-clad demonstrators including the Proud Boys shut down another drag event this weekend, in Columbus. A few months ago, more than 30 members of the militant Patriot Front were arrested after police found evidence of a conspiracy to disrupt a pride event in Idaho.

While Smith and her lawyers contend that a finding in their favor is a simple affirmation of her right not to be compelled to produce speech in this specific circumstance, the repercussions of the Supreme Court sanctioning businesses' desire to exclude customers could be much broader. As some high-profile commentators turn to open antisemitism, what would stop a photographer from refusing to work with Jews, or a chef refusing to serve Black people in his restaurant?

We shouldn't want the government to be able to force people to say certain things, but in these cases the merchants' objections aren't really about adopting clients' positions so much as shunning them for their identities. That should rightfully be a thing of the past.

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Don't count Trump out yet

By RICH LOWRY
(c) 2022 by King Features Synd., Inc.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

Donald Trump is in his weakest political state since 2015 or early 2016.

During his presidency, when he was at the center of countless intense controversies, he didn't blink once. He never showed fear or desperation. Both are clearly at work now in his gratuitous attacks on Govs. Ron DeSantis of Florida and Glenn Youngkin of Virginia, neither of whom has done anything to him, besides presenting a viable alternative to his continued dominance of the GOP.

Any Trump political obituaries are premature, though, until a verdict has been reached by the force that has buoyed him and lent him his overwhelming power in the GOP politics—Republican voters.

The idea that the "party decides"—that a party's elites guide voters to their preferred presidential candidate—got blown to smithereens in 2016. Trump had almost no institutional support and won anyway.

Since then, the party has neutered itself and, in many states, been affirmatively taken over by pro-Trump forces.

After the experience of the Access Hollywood tape and January 6, Republican officials have internalized the lesson that getting too far out in front of voters in expressing anti-Trump sentiment—indeed getting an inch in front of them—is potentially fatal.

> Any Trump political obituaries are premature until a verdict has been reached by the force that has buoyed him and lent him his overwhelming power in the GOP politics—Republican voters.

Politics is always a realm of artifice and whispered conversations, but the Trump era has taken it to another level in the GOP. Many of the elected officials who are Trump's biggest public boosters have a dim view of him in private. People serving at the highest levels of his administration—not deep state operatives, but his own political appointees—would make clear their discomfort with him in private. Even the most pro-Trump voices in the media often don't share their true feelings about him.

If the window has opened a crack to Trump criticism among Republican officialdom, it's still quite muted. Everyone considers it much safer to train their public fire on presumptive speaker Kevin McCarthy or Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

It's important to remember, by the way, that some of the worst candidate choices in the midterms were freely made by GOP primary electorates under the influence of the former president. There's been a lot of criticism of Democrats spending on weak MAGA candidates in the primaries. But these candidates never would have gotten nominated in the first place if Republican voters hadn't happily supported them, despite their flaws and despite Democrats desperately wanting to run against them.

One hopes that the lesson has finally been learned that Trump—no matter how much Republicans admire his combativeness, appreciate his entertainment value, and detest his enemies—is not a sound electoral guide, to put it mildly.

Trump didn't win a majority in either of his presidential elections, even the one he won; he was never anywhere close to 50% in the RealClearPolitics polling averages in either of his races; and his average job approval rating during his presidency never approached 50%, either.

Trump won in 2016 courtesy of Hillary Clinton, the Electoral College, and a dollop of luck. At the end of the day, he's a plurality, not a majority, candidate. And he's drawn to other plurality candidates, who, lacking the advantage of running in races with an electoral college or against Hillary Clinton, tend to lose. Winning 46.1% worked for Trump in 2016, but it's a formula for failure for everyone else.

There are early signs that voters have taken on board the contrast between Trump, who was embarrassed on election night and has been attacking other Republicans in crude terms, and Ron DeSantis, who won a crushing reelection victory and hasn't felt it necessary to throw out wild charges or insult other party leaders to try to deflect blame from himself.

The polls are very early but telling. A YouGov poll had DeSantis up over Trump nationally in a hypothetical 2024 matchup, 42-35. A new 2024 poll in Texas has DeSantis up by a similar 43-32. And a WPA Intelligence poll has DeSantis beating Trump in Iowa, New Hampshire, Florida and Georgia.

There will have to be much more of that to signal that a fundamental, enduring shift has taken place and coax party leaders out of their long defensive crouch. The party won't decide to turn against Trump until voters give it clear, unmistakable permission.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The tragedy of avoidable COVID deaths

By FAYE FLAM
Bloomberg Opinion

Faye Flam is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist covering science. She is host of the* Follow the Science *podcast*.

Whose pandemic strategy really saved lives? Which states or countries lost the most people to the virus? Or to the unintended consequences of mitigation efforts? Now there's finally some clear, objective data emerging from the fog.

The most telling statistic turns out to be the simplest: all-cause mortality. Tallies of who died, when and where can be used to calculate "excess mortality"—how many more people died in a given place and time period than would be expected. By contrast, official COVID-19 death statistics are clouded by differences in testing and a level of subjectivity doctors say is required to give a cause of death for people who had multiple health problems.

As early as the fall of 2020, statisticians were looking at all-cause mortality to try to figure out whether official COVID-19 deaths were overcounted or undercounted. But today, the death data are more complete, and cover enough time to make revealing comparisons between different periods and regions. While researchers are still figuring out which factors swayed these death statistics, a few conclusions are becoming clear: First, that COVID-19 has been a global tragedy, causing millions of deaths. Second, that vaccines have saved countless lives. And third, that during the omicron and delta waves, the value of any non-pharmaceutical mitigation measures—masking, distancing, closing businesses and schools—was probably not nothing, but vaccination rates mattered far, far more.

One recently released analysis, not yet peer reviewed, concluded that in the U.S. there were 1.17 million excess deaths from March 1, 2020, to Feb. 28, 2022—a death rate that's about 20% above the normal number of deaths (5,817,974) for that period. That's higher than the official COVID-19 death count. Excess mortality "is the most agnostic metric because it doesn't ask you to make decisions," said Jeremy Faust, an emergency medicine doctor at Brigham and Women's hospital and co-author of the analysis. "It just asks you to say, are these deaths normal?"

Looking at excess death data has allowed Faust and his collaborators to examine deaths by time period, region, gender, age and race, all broken down into the five or six waves of the pandemic. "We were really looking to say not just how big is this problem, but where is this problem?" he said, "And what does that tell us about our society and how we are responding?"

For example, comparisons made by Faust's team across different counties in Massachusetts showed excess deaths clustered in areas with low vaccination rates. In their nationwide analysis, they found the South had the most excess deaths and the lowest vaccine uptake. (Whether you're comparing counties, states or countries, excess deaths shouldn't depend on factors such as population age or overall health because the statistic compares the actual number of deaths in each region with the typical number of deaths in that same region, said Yale cardiologist Harlan Krumholz, co-author of the preprint.)

Faust and his team were also able to show that Native Americans, Black and Hispanic Americans died in disproportionate numbers, and that men showed more excess deaths than women. And in a surprising twist, while many more elderly people died by sheer numbers, the rate of excess death was higher among people under 50. That is, the death rate among those under 50 was more abnormal than the deaths of those over 65.

Comparing countries can be even more revealing. Another study, published this month in the Journal of the American Medical Association, showed much more excess mortality in the U.S. than was seen in a number of other wealthy countries during the delta and omicron waves.

> A few conclusions are becoming clear: First, that COVID-19 has been a global tragedy. Second, that vaccines have saved countless lives. And third… vaccination rates mattered.

That study tracked the period after June 2021, when vaccines were widely available in these countries. The U.S. had the most excess deaths, at 145.5 excess deaths per 100,000 people. The next-worst country was Finland with 82.2. The best two were Sweden, with 32.4, and New Zealand, with only 5.1 excess deaths per 100,000. The 10 most-vaccinated U.S. states appeared comparable to much of Europe at 65.1, while the least-vaccinated states had an excess death rate of 193.3. Numbers like these should help puncture the myth, persistent in some communities, that the vaccines themselves caused a significant number of deaths—that's simply not true.

Some of these rankings and statistics could seed new studies. There's more work to be done to understand why Sweden had fewer excess deaths than any European country studied, and Finland had more. Putting it into context, though, lead author Alyssa Bilinski of Brown University sent me statistics for the pre-vaccine period, where Finland suffered fewer excess deaths than Sweden, which had more lax restrictions than its neighbors. That might mean the restrictions imposed in Finland, but not Sweden, helped before the vaccines, but not afterwards, and might suggest Sweden did a better job of quickly getting the vaccines to the most vulnerable.

Vaccination rates were comparable across most European countries, but big differences in excess deaths might hinge on how efficiently these countries got those vaccines into the arms of the most vulnerable, and how well boosters were rolled out during the delta and omicron waves.

The U.S. fared far worse than any of the other countries studied, and New Zealand fared better. New Zealand had the lowest excess death rate before the vaccine rollout as well, and the U.S. came in second worst, next to Italy. Some of those differences may have to do with how badly hospitals were overwhelmed and whether countries were able to do anything to protect nursing home residents, as well as bad luck in getting hit early in 2020.

Bilinski's team also calculated how many U.S. lives would have been saved if we'd done as well as the other countries. There could be 465,747 more Americans alive today if we'd done as well as New Zealand and 375,159 alive if we'd done as well as Sweden.

Of course, there are variables that are hard to control, including the timing of waves—how they coincided with seasonal patterns and waning immunity.

But the parts we can control should become clearer as more scientists study these overall death rates. Right away, it was apparent that the most vaccinated parts of the U.S. had fewer excess deaths.

It would have been impossible for any country to get through the pandemic unscathed, but excess death statistics can show how much better the situation could have been. "This gives you a plausible counter-factual" said Bilinski. She said comparisons can also help focus on successes—whose actions weakened what would have been a Category 5 hurricanes to hit as a Category 3. Those lessons could save lives in future waves of COVID-19, or the next pandemic.

I lost a student to gun violence. Her name was Ruby

By SOFIA GONZALEZ
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Her name was Ruby. She was one of mine. A sophomore. I offered her one-on-one support in my academic lab as an intervention tier for kids who needed extra pushes in the right direction.

I see her face, and I hear her voice. Long jet black hair and dark frames. Super bubbly and talkative and always beefing with her teachers.

"Mrs. G., I like coming here. You cool, Mrs. G. Like you listen to me and don't judge, you feel me?"

"Yah, I feel you, Ruby. Show me your essay, show me what you got."

She would, with pride, whip out her laptop and slide it to me. She'd smile and watch as I read. She wasn't a bad writer; she had a way with literary devices.

"You likie?" she whispered.

"I likie," I responded.

She'd end up talking my ear off most days, and I'd let her. I appreciated her confiding in me. Her attendance was spotty, though, so I'd see her in spurts. But when she came, I felt her presence. She was so sweet and respectful. She always greeted me and would ask how I was doing. She wound up bringing to the lab a friend in trouble. I'd sign him in with positive attendance and help him too. This was last school year.

This school year, I thought she'd stop in, but I didn't see her.

During Thanksgiving week, staff members received an email informing us that a Morton East student, Ruby Navarrete, had died the prior weekend. My mind froze. I whispered to myself, "Is it her, my Ruby from last year?" A second email confirmed it. I asked how she passed and learned she was killed in a shooting at a party in the city. The wrong place. The wrong time.

I swiftly left my room and waved to security to watch my class. I went to the room of a trusted colleague and friend. A full panic attack commenced.

Several staff members surrounded me and encouraged me to breathe. My colleague Ritz just held me as I wept. Semi-audible words spilled out: "She was just a baby." "Her mom, her mom, Dios mio." My eyes were closed tight. My principal touched my shoulder and whispered, "I need you to breathe, kid."

I was taken in a wheelchair outside, where a crisp breeze and the afternoon sun roused me. I made it home in a colleague's car.

The evening was a blur. My family rushed to my aid, and texts and calls came in from my school community.

My reaction points to deeper wounds that still need healing. My experiences teaching in struggling parts of Chicago for many years, the panic and angst over gun violence, still rattle my insides like maracas.

I tried to take the message to Washington this summer, to spread awareness about the lives of my students and what it's like to be a teacher in an urban setting. Such are the stark realities of living and teaching in environments more susceptible to tragedies like Ruby's. Will the situation ever change? Can I bang my wooden spoon on pots any louder?

Ruby marks another student of mine lost to gun violence. The shooter isn't in custody. "Justice for Ruby" goes the beating drum of my heart.

The next day after finding out is always the hardest. I zero in on my student's favorite seat. My imagination places them there.

I worked in Chicago's toughest neighborhoods. I'm now a Title 1 teacher in Cicero, but my school isn't removed from these issues, which are all too familiar to communities of color. As a Latina, a teacher of color, I have a problem with this; these issues shouldn't be normalized. I'm deeply committed to my school community for its heart and grit. We need more resources, systemic change and support at the state and federal levels.

Ruby's funeral was excruciating. A sea of students, staff members and her family members gathered. She wore a crown, her hair long and flowing. Catholic chants and songs filled the air. Touching her hand, I whispered that I'd use my voice for change, somehow, in some way. I meant it.

This is what teachers and school communities go through when they lose a student to gun violence. I will continue to tell these stories.

I came back the next day to school and reported for duty. I will be back every time. This, I pray.

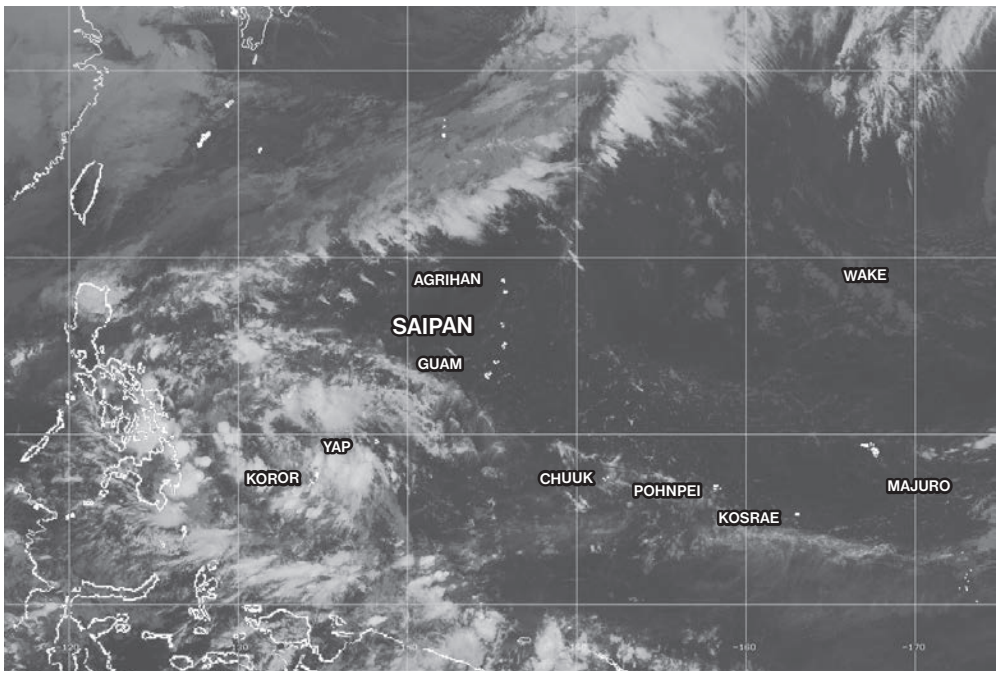
Sofia Gonzalez is a teacher at Morton East High School in Cicero, Illinois.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny
84° 78°	84° 78°	83° 78°	83° 78°	83° 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:55 AM, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A dry pattern continues with isolated showers present on radar. The Ipan buoy shows a primary east swell at 7 to 8 feet with a 9 second period.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	83° / 76°
Yap	Scattered Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Chuuk	Scattered Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Scattered Thunderstorms	87° / 78°
Kosrae	Scattered Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Majuro	Scattered Thunderstorms	84° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:31 AM	5:46 PM
Saturday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM
Sunday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM
Monday	6:33 AM	5:47 PM
Tuesday	6:33 AM	5:48 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	6:39 AM	6:18 PM
Saturday	-	7:33 AM	7:03 PM
Sunday	-	8:28 AM	7:51 PM
Monday	-	9:22 AM	8:42 PM
Tuesday	-	10:14 AM	9:34 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Showers	70° / 63°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	43° / 27°
Hong Kong	Sunny	72° / 59°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy/Wind	83° / 73°
London	Partly Cloudy	38° / 28°
Los Angeles	Sunny	63° / 43°
Manila	Thunderstorms	89° / 77°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	64° / 46°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	79° / 71°
New York	Partly Cloudy	53° / 35°
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	59° / 42°
Paris	Cloudy	38° / 29°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	58° / 41°
Rome	Rain	64° / 57°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	77° / 56°
San Francisco	Rain	55° / 44°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	48° / 27°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	53° / 42°
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	54° / 38°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
2:16 AM	Low Tide	-0.51
9:32 AM	High Tide	1.67
2:52 PM	Low Tide	1.12
7:15 PM	High Tide	1.59

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:00AM	7:45AM	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau
OZ624/701	3:40PM	10:35AM+1	3,6 via Incheon

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

OZ624	3:40PM	7:40PM	3, 6
TW308	4:30PM	8:20PM	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

BX621	3:10PM	6:30PM	3, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA184	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:40PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ623	9:00AM	2:40PM	3, 6
TW307	10:00AM	3:30PM	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

BX622	8:00AM	1:10PM	3, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS

INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2022

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:00 A.M.	7:15 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
9:50 A.M.	10:05 A.M.	
4:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:35 A.M.	7:50 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
10:25 A.M.	10:40 A.M.	
4:35 P.M.	4:50 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:10 A.M.	8:40 A.M.	
1:45 P.M.	2:15 P.M.	

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.	
2:35 P.M.	3:05 P.M.	

SAIPAN TO GUAM

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:10 A.M.	12:00 P.M.	
5:15 P.M.	6:05 P.M.	

GUAM TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
12:30 P.M.	1:20 P.M.	
6:40 P.M.	7:30 P.M.	

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Happy Holidays

MARIANAS COFFEE

Marianas Strong Since 2004

Marianas Coffee wants to thank all its customers and businesses for supporting our locally roasted coffee products here on Saipan.

Hotels

Hyatt Regency
Aqua Resort Club
Pacific Islands Club
Saipan World Resort
Coral Ocean Resort
Grandvrio Resort Saipan

Stores

Joeten Superstore
Joeten Stores
ABC Stores
Brabu Pharmacy
Himawari Saipan
LJ's Market

Restaurants & Bars

Godfather's Bar
Java Joes
Marianas Creations
Island Café
Mango Six Café

We kindly ask you to support and use these fine establishments for their excellent service and commitment to local brands.

Thank You,
David Hood
& TEAM

Christmas performances every Friday at the Hyatt

It is the second Friday of the month of December and on deck at the Hyatt Regency Saipan tonight will be the Marianas High School Glee Club starting at 5:30pm. This is not their first rodeo in performing at the Hyatt; in fact, the group is a staple in terms of serenading guests and the community, especially during this season to help spread the yuletide cheer.

According to their mentor, Harold Easton, the group was formed 12 years ago and has adopted the name "Rhythm 'N Harmony" in their second year. "Today, it is composed of 14 members and is a student-directed group after being directed for a number of years by Mr. Paul Dujua, who has left the CNMI. The current director is Ms. Mylan Goodwin, assisted by Mr. Deejay Santomin and our advisor director is R'nH alum Mrs. Donna Bartollo," he said.

Rhythm 'N Harmony has a solid background when it comes to performing on and off island. They have won the grand prize in Bridge Capital's Saipan Got Talent and performed the CNMI's national anthem in various events and occasions.

Abroad, they have participated in the Tumon Bay Music Festival for 10 years, was awarded the Gold Medal in all their performance years and won the Judges' Choice for High School Choral Groups six times. They were also awarded the prestigious Festival Sweepstakes Award from 2012 to 2018. The Festival has been on COVID-19 face-to-face hiatus since 2020, Easton said.

"While in Guam, the R'nH performed in four or five Guam schools, both elementary and high schools. For the nine school years prior to COVID-19, the group performed as part of the CNMI Thespian Team at the International Thespian Festival, held in Lincoln, Nebraska. This past year they performed again in that capacity, returning to the festival, which is now being held in Bloomington, Indiana," Easton added.

R'nH also competes in Group Musical Theatre and has received seven superior ratings and two excellent ratings and was ranked second in the nation in 2012. Among its additional accomplishments, R'nH members have portrayed significant roles in Jonathan Larson's *Rent*, Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods*, Marc Sheiman and Scott Wittman's *Hairspray*, and other musical reviews produced by Friends of the Arts, Saipan.

"It is Rhythm 'N Harmony's hope to inspire and delight the community with their expression of performing arts as well as to find new talents and continuously develop their technique to become well-rounded performers," Easton said."We are excited to perform at the Hyatt Regency Saipan again. We have done so in the past and we are delighted to be back."

Everyone is invited as this is open to the public. For more information, call (670) 234-1234. Hyatt Regency Saipan is the first international hotel in the CNMI and is celebrating their 42nd year anniversary in the CNMI. ***(Hyatt Regency Saipan)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marianas High School's "Rhythm 'N Harmony" will be performing at the Hyatt Regency Saipan today, Friday, starting at 5:30pm.

COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CEDA)
PO Box 502149, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. No. 670-234-6245 | Fax: 670-235-7147
Website: www.developcnmi.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Friday, December 9, 2022

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION DIVISION (DCD) OF THE COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CEDA) THRU ITS CHAIRMAN HEREBY INFORMS THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE DCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL HOLD ITS REGULAR MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2022 AT 9:30 A.M.. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE CEDA CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, CEDA BUILDING, OLEAI, SAIPAN. THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
  A. Call to Order
  B. Roll Call
  C. Adoption of Agenda
  D. Adoption of Minutes – May 11, 2022
II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
III. REPORTS
  A. DCD Financial Status
IV. OLD BUSINESS
V. NEW BUSINESS
  A. Deliberation and Board action on legal issue on a property in Rota
  B. Deliberation & Board Action on loan matter - David Atalig
VI. OTHER MATTERS
VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
VIII. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 1(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/ FRANK LEE SN. BORJA
Chairman, DCD Board of Directors

COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CEDA)
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Tel. No. 670-234-6245 | Fax: 670-235-7147
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Friday, December 9, 2022

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CEDA) THRU ITS CHAIRWOMAN, HEREBY INFORMS THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE CEDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL HOLD A REGULAR MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2022, AT 2:00 P.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE CEDA CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, CEDA BUILDING, OLEAI SAIPAN. THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
  A. Call to Order
  B. Roll Call
  C. Adoption of Agenda
  D. Adoption of Minutes
    1. August 25, 2022
II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
III. REPORTS
  A. Executive Director's Report
    1. Administrative
      a. Board deliberation & action on rear permeable parking project
    2. Loan Matters:
      a. Deliberation & Board action on Frances S. Arriola
      b. Board's ratification of its action on the additional three-month payment relief to CEDA borrowers
      c. Deliberation & Board action on legal issue on a property in Rota
      d. Deliberation & Board action on Tito Sablan & the Estate of Elphidia C. Sablan†
      e. Deliberation & Board action on Maria A. & Michael Aguon loan
  B. Comptroller's Report
    1. Financial Report update
  C. Qualifying Certificate Program/Economic Development Activities
    1. Program update
IV. OLD BUSINESS
V. NEW BUSINESS
VI. OTHER MATTERS
VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
VIII. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. *(Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)*

/s/ AUBRY M. HOCOG
Chairwoman

500 SAILS

P.O. BOX 10001 PMB 326
SAIPAN, MP 96950

500 SAILS
REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS
EDA GRANT NO. 07-79-07817
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS MARITIME TRAINING CENTER
500 SAILS-2022/RSQ-002

500 Sails, located in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, is soliciting bids from qualified vendors that are interested in providing professional services for the architectural and engineering design and construction management for the Northern Mariana Islands Maritime Training Center (aka Cultural Maritime Training Center of CMTC).

The EDA funded project proposed is a renovation of a 30,900 sq ft warehouse that is in generally good condition and currently in use as a boatyard and teaching facility, and administrative offices. The renovation does not change the footprint of the warehouse. The renovation includes construction of a classrooms and offices area, roof repairs, replacement of warehouse doors and windows, the selection and installation of air conditioning, an air circulation system, selection and installation of an overhead crane, and the installation of multiple delivery points of compressed air,and electrical outlets within the boatyard/shop floor.

The Scope of Work is available beginning December 2, 2022 at 9:00 am Chamorro Standard Time (ChST) via download or in print at the 500 Sails Boatyard and Administrative office, located in Lower Base, Saipan. Requests may be sent via email to nmimtc@500Sails.org.

A bidder's site walk will be held at the 500 Sails boatyard on December 13, 2022 at 4:00pm ChST.

All questions or inquiries regarding this RSQ are due no later than 9:00 pm, December 16, 2022 by email only. Responses to questions or inquiries will be provided to all bidder's site walk attendees by December 20, 2022.

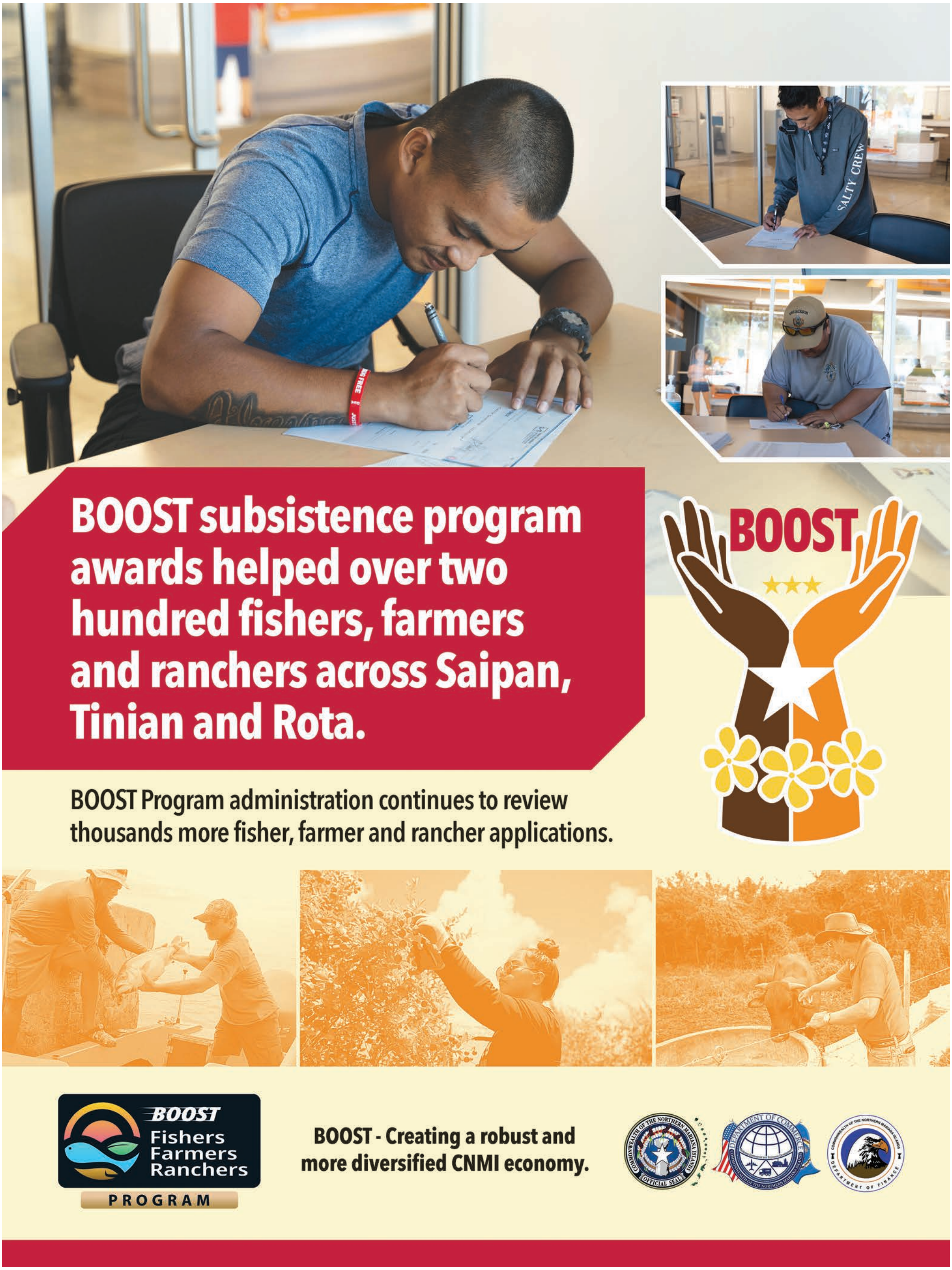
Sealed proposal for this project shall be submitted with one (1) original and four (4) copies to the 500 Sails Boatyard and Administrative Office, located at in Lower Base, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than 3:00pm, local time, ChST, January 3, 2023 and must be marked **"Proposal - Northern Marianas Maritime Training Center 500 Sails-2022-RSQ-002"**.

Please note that **500 Sails-2022/RSQ-002** differs significantly from **500 Sails-2022/RSQ-001** released earlier.

Electronic submissions may be accepted if approved prior to the submission deadline.

Failure to follow the instructions regarding the submission of RSQ Responses may result in 500 Sails' choice to disqualify such bids.

Pete Perez
Executive Director



BOOST subsistence program awards helped over two hundred fishers, farmers and ranchers across Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

BOOST

BOOST Program administration continues to review thousands more fisher, farmer and rancher applications.

BOOST Fishers Farmers Ranchers PROGRAM

BOOST - Creating a robust and more diversified CNMI economy.

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INVITATION FOR BID
CUC-IFB-23-003

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF A MEDIUM-DUTY BOOM TRUCK VEHICLE

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the supply and delivery of a medium-duty boom truck for the Power Plant in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked ***"CUC-IFB-23-003, Supply and Delivery of a Medium Duty Boom Truck"*** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on January 4, 2023** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before the due date and time or post-marked before the submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on December 19, 2022,** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC's Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with copies to Jubal Slayer, CUC's Technical Manager for Oil via email at jubal.slayer@cucgov.org and Christie L. Sablan, CUC's Senior Administrative Technician at christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in the said bids, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids submitted shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Business

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Japan's economy shrank less in July-Sept, revised data show

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's economy contracted less than previously thought in the last quarter, weathering the country's latest big COVID wave with less damage than had been thought.

The Cabinet Office reported Thursday that the economy shrank at a 0.8% annual rate in July-September. That was better than minus 1.2% annual growth reported earlier.

In quarterly terms, the world's third-largest economy contracted 0.2% instead of 0.3%.

Pandemic precautions eased in the late summer, allowing normal business activity and travel to resume after many months of on-again, off-again limits. Exports also were stronger than earlier thought, expanding 2.1% in annual terms, up from the earlier estimate of 1.9%.

Growth in the last fiscal year, which ended in March, also was revised upward to an annual 2.5% pace from 2.3%. The new data also showed corporate investment rose more than reported earlier.

South Korea widens back-to-work orders on striking truckers

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's government expanded its back-to-work orders Thursday against thousands of cargo truck drivers who are staging a nationwide walkout over freight fare issues, saying a prolonged strike could inflict "deep scars" on the country's economy.

The "work start" orders on steel and fuel truckers were inevitable because the strike could begin to hurt major export industries like automobiles and shipbuilding if it extends further, Finance Minister Choo Kyung-ho said in a news conference.

The strike's impact has so far been mostly limited to domestic industries like construction.

The orders, which were initially issued Nov. 29 on some 2,500 cement truckers, were expanded to about 6,000 drivers transporting steel and 4,500 transporting fuel and chemicals. Police are also clamping down on unionists who threaten or disrupt colleagues who choose to work.

New York Times journalists, other workers on 24-hour strike

NEW YORK (AP)—Hundreds of journalists and other employees at The New York Times began a 24-hour walkout Thursday in what would be the first strike of its kind at the newspaper in more than 40 years.

Newsroom employees and other members of The NewsGuild of New York say they are fed up with bargaining that has dragged on since their last contract expired in March 2021. The union announced last week that more than 1,100 employees would stage a 24-hour work stoppage starting at 12:01 a.m. Thursday unless the two sides reach a contract deal.

The NewsGuild tweeted Thursday morning that workers, "are now officially on work stoppage, the first of this scale at the company in 4 decades. It's never an easy decision to refuse to do work you love, but our members are willing to do what it takes to win a better newsroom for all."

Negotiations took place Tuesday and some of Wednesday, but the sides remained far apart on issues including wage increases and remote-work policies.

On Wednesday evening the union said via Twitter that a deal had not been reached and the walkout was happening. "We were ready to work for as long as it took to reach a fair deal," it said, "but management walked away from the table with five hours to go."

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INVITATION FOR BID
CUC-IFB-23-005

Sewer Main and Manhole Replacement Project (Tanapag, Capitol Hill and Oleai)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Sewer Main and Manhole Replacement (Tanapag, Capitol Hill and Oleai) in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists of the installation of gravity sewer main, new service laterals, connection to existing service laterals, and the installation of sewer manholes.

The project is funded by a grant from the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act (ASADRA) and CUC. The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from ASADRA.

CUC requires the project to be completed in **365 calendar** days from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The IFB package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **December 6, 2022 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No. 17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the bid MUST be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-23-002, Sewer Main and Manhole Replacement Project (Tanapag, Capitol Hill and Oleai)"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 20, 2022,** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

A Bid Guarantee of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the Unites States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety.

A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 8, 2022** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC's Purchasing Administrator, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org, with a copy to Larry Manacop, Acting Chief Engineer for Water/Wastewater via email at larry.manacop@cucgov.org, Joel Puyat, Water/Wastewater Engineer via email at joel.puyat@cucgov.org and Ms. Christie L. Sablan, Procurement & Supply, Senior Administrative Technician via email address at christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
ENERGY DIVISION
P.O. Box 500340, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. Nos. (670) 664-4480 / Fax No. (670) 664-4483 | E-mail: cnmienergy@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

STRATEGIC ENERGY PLAN PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Office of the Governor, Department of Public Works (DPW) - Energy Division, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) and Office of Planning and Development (OPD), in coordination with the Office of Grants Management (OGM) comprise the Energy Task Force (ETF) as established by Executive Order 2021-16. One of its missions is to update the Strategic Energy Plan, which was first prepared in 2013. The Strategic Energy Plan provides a road map for the development of cost-effective energy management solutions, including efficiency/optimization upgrades, demand side management, and use of renewable and future energy solutions on the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. This Plan is a living document and will serve to identify short- medium- and long-term goals to reduce energy costs and progress the CNMI towards a low carbon energy portfolio.

The ETF seeks to gather public feedback and comments on the draft Strategic Energy Plan and about the current state of the energy systems on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, which will be considered to support the plan update.

For additional information about the Strategic Energy Plan update, including a copy of the Draft report and links to provide written comments, visit the project website at http://lrsp.mysocialpinpoint.com/cnmi-sep or by scanning the QR code to the right. The comment period is open starting 12/9/22 and ends 03/31/23.

SCAN ME

Project Website: http://lrsp.mysocialpinpoint.com/cnmi-sep
Project Website via QR Code: Scan above
Project email: cnmienergyplan@ghd.com

Nation

Georgia vote gives Harris reprieve as Senate tiebreaker

WASHINGTON (AP)—Vice President Kamala Harris needed to get to the U.S. Senate to break a tie. But first she had to avoid causing a traffic jam.

One more senator had to vote before Harris could end the impasse, and he was in Georgetown, on the opposite side of Washington. If Harris left in her motorcade, street closures would likely cut off his route to Capitol Hill.

So she waited.

"I was on the phone with the senator's staff telling them, you have to tell me when he's in the car and when he's crossed the threshold through downtown," Kristine Lucius, former director of legislative affairs for Harris, recalled about the vote on an administration nominee last year.

Such has been the delicate balancing act for Harris, whose role as president of the Senate has been a defining feature of her first two years in office. With the help of careful scheduling—and even an eye on traffic patterns when necessary —she's swiftly outpaced her predecessors when it comes to breaking ties.

Now the pressure will be off. Sen. Raphael Warnock's victory in the Georgia runoff means Democrats will expand their majority to 51 seats. Although Harris may still get called upon, such as when senators are absent, the party will have a little more breathing room on close votes.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said Wednesday that his caucus "has been deeply grateful" for Harris' "constant schedule juggling."

Harris

"It's part of her job. But I think she's done a lot of other good things," he said. "And now she's going to have a little more time to do those things. Because the need for her to be here will be less."

Vice presidents have an infamously sparse job description under the Constitution, and one of their only responsibilities is serving as president of the Senate. It's been a mostly ceremonial role in recent administrations. President Joe Biden didn't have to break a single tie in his eight years as vice president.

Harris, a former senator from California, has had a much more hands-on experience because the chamber has been evenly divided in an era of sharp partisanship.

A dozen nominees would not have been confirmed without her vote. She also helped nudge the American Rescue Plan, a $1.9 trillion coronavirus relief measure, and the Inflation Reduction Act, the centerpiece of Biden's domestic agenda, over the finish line.

All told, she's cast 26 tie-breaking votes. John C. Calhoun, who served as vice president under John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, has the record for 31—but that's over the course of nearly eight years, rather than Harris' two.

"Floating holds" limiting travel were built into Harris' schedule weeks in advance when there was a chance she would be needed on Capitol Hill, preventing her from straying far from Washington.

When she did travel, she tended to go on Mondays, Thursdays or Fridays because most Senate votes were on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. And short hops to Baltimore or Richmond were preferable to flights around the country, which would make rushing back for a vote logistically complicated.

Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., said, "Any time we were here, she had to be ready, because even things that might have seemed noncontroversial, appointments and stuff, could deadlock." Harris was "never completely free to make other plans," he said.

One of the exceptions was the Munich Security Conference in February, which Harris attended shortly before Russia invaded Ukraine.

Trump Organization convicted in executive tax dodge scheme

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump's company was convicted of tax fraud Tuesday for helping executives dodge taxes on extravagant perks such as Manhattan apartments and luxury cars, a repudiation of financial practices at the former president's business as he mounts another run for the White House.

A jury found two corporate entities at the Trump Organization guilty on all 17 counts, including charges of conspiracy and falsifying business records. Trump himself was not on trial. The verdict in state court in New York came after about 10 hours of deliberations over two days.

The conviction was validation for New York authorities who say their three-year investigation into Trump and his businesses is continuing. The probe, which began as an inquiry into hush-money payments made on Trump's behalf, later morphed into an examination of the company's asset valuation and pay practices.

The company faces a fine of up to $1.6 million. Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 13. The defense said it will appeal.

"A former president's companies now stand convicted of crimes. That is consequential," Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg said outside the courtroom. "It underscores that in Manhattan we have one standard of justice for all."

Trump, a Republican who launched his 2024 campaign last month during the trial, blasted the verdict as a part of a Democrat-led "MANHATTAN WITCH HUNT!"

"This case is unprecedented and involved no monetary gain to these two Corporations," Trump said in a statement, adding: "New York City is a hard place to be 'Trump.'"

The verdict adds to mounting legal woes for Trump, who faces a criminal investigation in Washington over the retention of top-secret documents at his Mar-a-Lago estate, as well as efforts to undo the results of the 2020 presidential election.

Those inquiries are being led by a newly named Justice Department special counsel. The district attorney in Atlanta is also leading an investigation into attempts by Trump and his allies to overturn his loss in that state.

The verdict also comes amid a series of self-inflicted crises for Trump in recent weeks, including anger over his dinner with a Holocaust-denying white nationalist and the antisemitic rapper formerly known as Kanye West, and the former president's for the "termination of all rules, regulations, and articles, even those found in the Constitution" to address his baseless claims of mass election fraud.

The Trump Organization—and Trump's management of it—was at the center of "The Apprentice," the reality show that solidified his global celebrity. That fame in turn helped fuel his unlikely political rise, allowing him to sell himself to voters as a successful businessman who could take lessons from that sphere and apply them to Washington.

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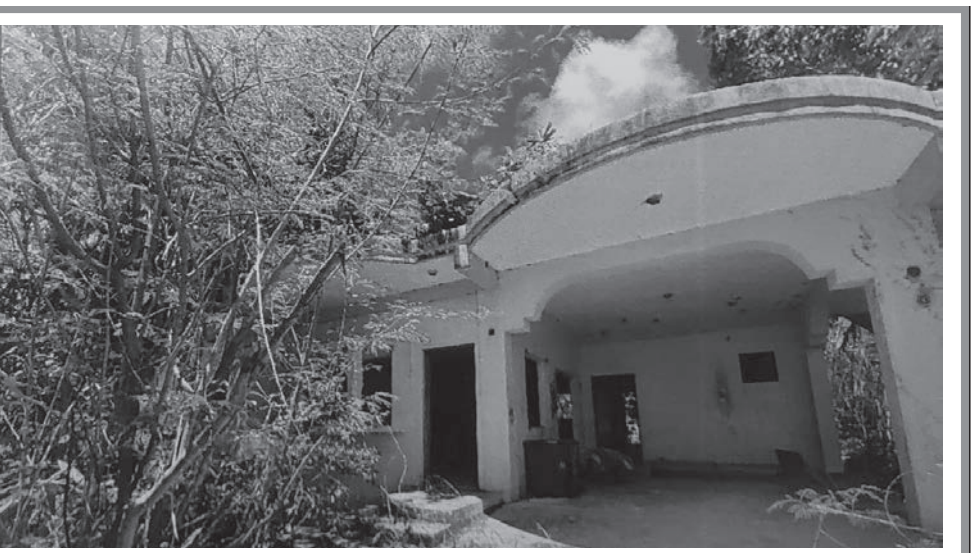


PROPERTY FOR SALE
LOT NO. 002 G 300
NOTICE OF AUCTION & SALE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the undersigned counsel, Attorney Robert T. Torres (the auctioneer or his designee), for and on behalf of the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund, will sell at auction, to the highest bidder, on **December 20, 2022**, at 10:00 a.m., at the Law Office of Robert T. Torres, Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, Saipan, the premises and real estate, lying and being on Alageta Road, Kagman III, Saipan Municipality, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, described further as follows:

Lot No. 002 G 300, containing an area of 929 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 002 G 07, the original of which was recorded on May 14, 1990, as Document No. 90-1904 at the Commonwealth Recorder's Office, Saipan, CNMI.

Terms and Conditions of Sale.

1. **Rights and Duties of Auctioneer.** Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties conducting the auction sale:
   a) withdraw the property listed for sale in the public announcement before the sale or before a bid for such property is accepted;
   b) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever there; and
   c) to reject any and all bids.

2. **Minimum Bid.** The minimum bid for the sale of Lot No. 002 G 300 is **Ninety Thousand Dollars and 00/100 (US $90,000.00).** All bids shall be in writing and constitute a formal offer from each bidder. Bids may be submitted in advance for said property. Bids may be submitted in advance in writing for the foregoing property. The minimum bid shall be considered the opening bid for the property. Bids may be submitted in person (at the auction), via email, or in writing by telephone to Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, 5962 Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 500730, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 670-234-7859; Fax: 670-234-5749; Email: robert.torres@rttlawgroup.com by 8:00 a.m., Chamorro Standard Time on the auction date. Any person who submits his/her bid shall provide a copy of his/her valid Identification Card (valid CNMI Driver's License or Passport). A written bid shall include the bidder's signature, with his/her telephone number, mailing address, and any other contact information. The winning bidder shall be the person to whom the property is confirmed if the bid is accepted. The CNMI Retirement Fund assumes no liability for any errors or omissions as to a bidder's name or identification if that information is not correctly indicated on the bid form. **Please contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres for a bid form.**

3. **Deposit and Payment.** A non-refundable guarantee deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale by the winning bidder, no later than 4:00 pm on that date, by payment to the Law Office of Robert T. Torres. The remaining balance shall be due within ten (10) calendar days from the auction sale. If the tenth calendar day falls on a weekend then the balance shall be due that Monday after the tenth calendar day. All payments shall be made by cash, money order, or cashier's check. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the 10% deposit, and any and all of the bidder's rights, title, and interest in the money shall revert to the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund.

4. **Change of Terms.** Auctioneer and the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund reserve the right to change any of the terms conducted and enforcement of sale by the announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause shall be binding on any buyer by the constructive notice.

5. **Quitclaim Deed to Winning Bidder:** All bidders are notified that the NMI Retirement Funds, the Judgment – Creditors, shall issue a Quitclaim Deed to the Winning Bidder.

6. **Inspection and No Warranty.** Bidders are informed and cautioned to inspect the title and property including performing any title research, property inspection, boundary inspection, easement research, and encroachment research on the subject property. Contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of the property are being sold **"AS IS"** and without warranties including but not limited to habitability or fitness for purpose. Failure to inspect the real property will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any buyer. A copy of the appraisal report and other documents pertaining to the property to be sold at auction are available upon request for review in advance of the auction date.

DATED this 3rd day of December 2022.

/s/_____
Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer
for NMI Retirement Fund

Asia

In China's 'zero COVID' policy, uncertainty reigns and unsettles

AP

In this photo taken May 2022 and released by Leah Zhang, passengers some wearing protective overalls wait for their train at a train station in Shanghai.

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—As coronavirus cases rose in Shanghai earlier this year and the city's lockdown stretched from weeks to months, Leah Zhang's feeling of suffocation grew.

Though she could walk around campus freely, she was robbed of weekends spent seeing concerts in the city. She couldn't stomach the cafeteria food—too sweet for her taste buds accustomed to the spicy Sichuanese cuisine she grew up with.

When her boyfriend told her he would "always trust" Shanghai's government, she broke up with him. After censors took down a video compilation called Voices of April with some of the most defining moments of the lockdown, including crying infants being separated from their parents during quarantine, Zhang broke down.

"I cried to the point where I can't trust anything anymore," said Zhang, who asked to be identified by her English name out of fear of government retribution for discussing a sensitive topic. "I can only trust myself, I can't trust anyone else, or any government."

Zhang knows that her experience was hardly unique—or even particularly extreme—but it gives a glimpse of how China's stringent "zero COVID" policy pushed ordinary people to a breaking point, one that led to nationwide protests late last month.

Over 26 million people in Shanghai were confined for two months in one of the country's strictest and most visible lockdowns. And over the past three years, various Chinese cities have suffered similar fates, as the government held fast to the policy, which aims to stop transmission of the virus through severe isolation procedures and constant mass testing.

In the wake of a wave of public anger not seen for decades, the government announced Wednesday that it would relax some of the most onerous restrictions, in a dramatic shift.

But perhaps now more than ever, Chinese people face a confusing mass of measures, as local officials struggle to balance the latest policy directives with the fear of an uncontrolled outbreak.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Deep, 5.8 magnitude quake shakes Indonesia's capital

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—A strong and deep earthquake shook Indonesia's capital and other parts of the main island Java on Thursday but there were no immediate reports of serious damage or casualties.High-rises in Jakarta, the capital, swayed for several seconds and some ordered evacuations. The U.S. Geological Survey said the 5.8 magnitude earthquake shook at a depth of 123.7 kilometers (76.9 miles) centered 14 km (8.7 miles) northwest of Ciranjang-hilir in West Java province, the same province where a magnitude 5.6 earthquake on Nov. 21 in Cianjur city killed at least 334 people and injured nearly 600.

Australia wants Indonesia to monitor released bombmaker

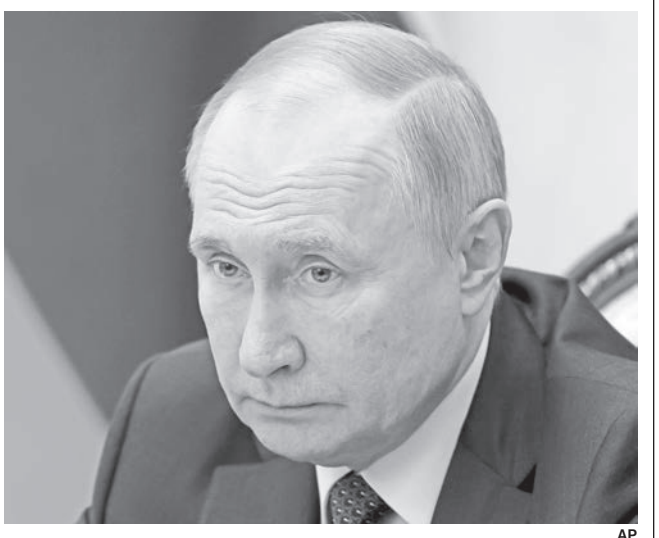
CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Australia's government on Thursday said it was seeking assurances from Indonesia that the man convicted of making the bombs used in the 2002 Bali terrorist attacks would continue to be monitored after his release from prison. Islamic militant Hisyam bin Alizein, also known as Umar Patek, was paroled Wednesday after serving about half of his original 20-year sentence, despite strong objections from Australia. The attacks killed 202 people, including 88 Australians. Australia's Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles said it was a difficult day for those who lost loved ones in the bombings.

Taliban carry out 1st public execution since Afghan takeover

ISLAMABAD (AP)—The Taliban authorities on Wednesday executed an Afghan convicted of killing another man, the first public execution since the former insurgents took over Afghanistan last year, a spokesman said. The announcement underscored the intentions by Afghanistan's new rulers to continue hard-line policies implemented since they took over the country in August 2021 and to stick to their interpretation of Islamic law, or Sharia. The execution, carried out with an assault rifle by the victim's father, took place in western Farah province before hundreds of spectators and many top Taliban officials, according to Zabihullah Mujahid, the top Taliban government spokesman. Some officials came from the capital Kabul.

World

Putin says Ukraine fight is taking longer than expected



AP

Russian President Vladimir Putin attends the annual meeting of the Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights via videoconference in Moscow, Russia, Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022.

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Russian President Vladimir Putin acknowledged Wednesday that his "special military operation" in Ukraine is taking longer than expected but said it has succeeded in seizing new territory and added that his country's nuclear weapons are deterring escalation of the conflict.

"Of course, it could be a lengthy process," Putin said of the more than 9-month-old war that began with Russia's invasion Feb. 24 and has displaced millions from their homes, and killed and wounded tens of thousands. Despite its length, he showed no signs of letting up, vowing to "consistently fight for our interests" and to "protect ourselves using all means available." He reiterated his claim that he had no choice but to send in troops, saying that for years, the West responded to Russia's security demands with "only spit in the face."

Speaking in a televised meeting in Russia with members of his Human Rights Council, Putin described the land gains as "a significant result for Russia," noting that the Sea of Azov "has become Russia's internal sea." In one of his frequent historic references to a Russian leader he admires, he added that "Peter the Great fought to get access" to that body of water.

After failing to take Kyiv due to fierce Ukrainian resistance, Russia seized broad swaths of southern Ukraine at the start of the invasion and captured the key Sea of Azov port of Mariupol in May after a nearly three-month siege. In September, Putin illegally annexed four Ukrainian regions even though his forces didn't completely control them: Kherson and Zaporizhzhia in the south, and Donetsk and Luhansk in the east. In 2014, he had illegally annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula.

In response to an increasing influx of advanced Western weapons, economic, political and humanitarian aid to Kyiv and what he saw as Western leaders' inflammatory statements, Putin has periodically hinted at his potential use of nuclear weapons. When a member of the Human Rights Council asked him Wednesday to pledge that Russia would not be the first to use such weapons, Putin demurred. He said Russia would not be able to use nuclear weapons at all if it agreed not to use them first and then came under a nuclear strike.

"If it doesn't use it first under any circumstances, it means that it won't be the second to use it either, because the possibility of using it in case of a nuclear strike on our territory will be sharply limited," he said.

Rapid fall from power, arrest for Peru president

LIMA, Peru (AP)_In just three tumultuous hours, President Pedro Castillo went from decreeing the dissolution of Peru's Congress to being replaced by his vice president, but the threats against his government had been building throughout his nearly 17-month presidency.

The former school teacher and center-left political novice, who won a runoff election in June 2021 by just 44,000 votes, stepped onto a no-holds-barred political battlefield in Peru, the South American country now on its sixth president in six years. By nightfall Wednesday, after a day of high political drama, prosecutors had announced Castillo was under arrest, facing charges of rebellion.

From the start, Castillo's presidency seemed destined to be short-lived, said Flavia Freidenberg, a political scientist at the National Autonomous University of Mexico and a member of the university's Latin America Political Reform Observatory.

"He is a president who took office with a very low level of support, he didn't have a political party, he had a hard time putting together a Cabinet, the Cabinet has changed constantly and there has been a constant power struggle with Congress," she said.

Castillo, a rural school teacher from an impoverished district high in the Andes, was considered a clear underdog when he joined the race to replace President Francisco Sagasti, who had been appointed by Congress in November 2020. Sagasti was the last of three heads of state Peru cycled through in one week that November.

Castillo campaigned on promises to nationalize Peru's key mining industry and rewrite the constitution, gaining support in rural Peru. But upon taking office in July 2021, Castillo immediately struggled with his Cabinet choices, a number of whom have been accused of wrongdoing.

"He didn't unify the country," said Eric Farnsworth, vice president of the Council of the Americas. "He doesn't even seem to make much of an effort along those lines."

"He didn't have much of a mandate, and so he did not promote policies somehow that were easily identifiable as for the good of the majority of the people," Farnsworth said. "Instead, he became embroiled in intrigues, corruption and battles with Congress."

The first attempt to impeach Castillo came last December At the time, a relatively small group of opposition lawmakers cited an investigation by prosecutors into illicit financing of the governing party. To remove the president requires two-thirds of the 130 lawmakers to vote in favor. Only 46 voted in favor.

Off The Wall

Camel pageant is among World Cup's sidelines attractions

AP

A member of the AlKuwari family shows the trophy after winning the first prize at the Mzayen World Cup, a pageant held in the Qatari desert some 15 miles away from Doha and soccer's World Cup, in Ash- Shahaniyah, Qatar, Friday, Dec. 2, 2022.

ASH-SHHANIYA, Qatar (AP)—Like all good pageant contestants, Nazaa'a displayed not only dazzling beauty but also poise and grace.

She batted her eyelashes and flashed a toothy smile for the television cameras at the Mzayen World Cup, a pageant held in the Qatari desert about 15 miles (25 kilometers) away from Doha and soccer's World Cup.

Nazaa'a, mind you, is a camel.

Think Westminster Dog Show crossed with the Miss America Pageant, except for, well, camels.

Nazaa'a is a majestic light-haired creature that overcame several preliminary rounds and hundreds of other camels to win the pageant at Qatar Camel Mzayen Club on Friday.

The event, which was designed to bring cultural awareness to World Cup visitors, was sponsored by the Ministry of Sports and Youth, in conjunction with the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, the local World Cup organizing committee.

Nazaa'a was one of 15 camels who competed for the crown, parading by fans while wearing bejeweled collars and draped with strings of gemstones.

"I thought our camel was better than Ronaldo and Messi," joked Jassim al Kuwari, part of the family that owns Nazaa'a.

These events are held regularly throughout the Middle East, where the people have connected with camels for generations.

"This is our culture. This is from long time ago, from our fathers and grandfathers," Al Kuwari said. "Today is a competition, a beauty competition. We like these camels. We give them names. It's like a family."

Visitors were greeted by a camel jingle "Welcome to the Camel Competition" and served Karak, a spiced tea with milk. Owners and their families sat in an air-conditioned luxury tent with red velvet chairs and a glass wall to watch the competition.

The main attraction were the pure-bred female camels. Competitors makes several passes in front of a stand of fans that cheer for their favorite. There's also a milking competition, with the prize going to the camel that produces the most milk.

Make no mistake, this a serious contest: A doctor is on staff to make sure the animals don't use fillers or Botox to make them more beautiful. Last December dozens of camels were disqualified from the King Abdulaziz Camel Festival in Saudi Arabia for cosmetic enhancements.

Then there's the money: The winner, runner-up and third place camels all receive trophies. Nazaa's owners earned 200,000 Qatari riyals ($55,000). The camel that produces the most milk wins 15,000 riyal.

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

German police seek help in solving bull sperm heist

BERLIN (AP)—Police in western Germany are appealing for help in cracking a potentially very cold case. Authorities say about 60 containers of bull sperm were stolen from a farm in the town of Olfen, 90 kilometers (56 miles) northeast of Cologne, late Monday or early Tuesday. Police said in a statement Wednesday that while it's unclear how the rustle happened, the precious cargo needs to be supercooled with liquid nitrogen at—196 Celsius degrees (–320 Fahrenheit) so it isn't spoiled. They are seeking tips from the public that might lead to the recovery of the sperm, which was intended for artificial insemination.

Farmer: Georgia dog injured saving sheep from coyote attack

DECATUR, Ga. (AP)—A Georgia sheepdog is recovering at home two days after killing a pack of coyotes that attacked his owner's flock of sheep, farmer John Wierwiller said. Casper, a 20-month old Great Pyrenees from Decatur, fought off a pack of coyotes who were threatening Wierwiller's sheep farm, he said. The fight lasted longer than half an hour, left eight coyotes dead and bloodied Casper, with skin and part of his tail torn off, Wierwiller told Atlanta's WAGA-TV. He scampered off but returned injured two days later after Wierwiller put out a call on social media. "He was kinda looking at me like, 'Boss, stop looking at how bad I look, just take care of me,'" Wierwiller said. LifeLine Animal Project has raised more than $15,000 for the sheepdog's hospital bills.

27 flee plane in Spain after pregnant woman simulates labor

BARCELONA, Spain (AP)—Spanish police were searching for 14 people who ran from a plane at Barcelona's airport after it made an emergency landing Wednesday to obtain assistance for a pregnant woman who allegedly simulated that she was about to give birth, authorities said.The office for Spain's government in the Catalonia region said the incident occurred when a Pegasus Airlines flight from Casablanca, Morocco, to Istanbul with 228 passengers on board requested the emergency landing at Josep Tarradellas Barcelona-El Prat Airport.As the woman was getting evacuated from the plane, 27 passengers exited the aircraft without authorization and "tried to flee," officials said.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD
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Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on ***Wednesday, December 14, 2022, at 8 a.m.*** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Administration Building, Governor's Conference Room on Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

I. Meeting Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (10/26/2022)
V. Public Comments
VI. Chairperson's Report
- Re-nomination and Confirmation Hearing for Dr. Angelica Sabino
- Compliance with the full licensure requirements
- Issues on Healthcare Providers Practicing without a License

VII. Director's Report
- 2022 Citizen Centric Report
- Financial Report
- Notification on the Proposed Amendments for Psychology & Physicians
- Update on the Energov Program

VIII. Investigator's Report
IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
A. Governor's Office
- Re-nomination Letter for Dr. Angelica Sabino

B. Legislature
- Confirmation Hearing for Dr. Angelica Sabino

X. Old Business
XI. New Business
- Proposed Dental Therapist Practice Agreement

XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
A. New Application
B. Renewal Application

XIII. Miscellaneous Business
XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
XV. Announcements
A. Next Meeting Date
B. Adjournment of Meeting

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 501055•SAIPAN•MP•96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIPORTS.COM

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES
BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
AIRCRAFT PARKING APRON REHABILITATION
AIP 3-69-0003-34/XX

The Commonwealth Ports Authority's (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA hereby seeks the services of qualified consulting firms to provide Construction Management Services for the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport Aircraft Parking Apron Rehabilitation Project, AIP 3-69-0003-34/XX.

The project is being funded by U.S. Federal Aviation Administration in accordance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations, Section 40-50-202, Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the RFQ package. Electronic copies may be made available upon written request to Ms. Wendi Prater at wprater@cnmiports.com or Ms. Sheri LIagas at receptionist@cnmiports.com.

Questions regarding this request for qualification statements must be submitted in writing to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, CPA Executive Assistant/Project Manager, via email to wprater@cnmiports.com or hand delivered to the CPA Administration Office by no later than 5:00 p.m. CHST, local time, Friday, December 16, 2022.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m. CHST, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2022**. Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director
Date: November 22, 2022

JOB VACANY ANNOUNCEMENT

JC MARKETING INC. (SAIPAN)

A local wholesale company oriented in the sales and marketing of consumer, medical and industrial products is seeking an experienced,

FIELD SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Applicants must be experienced in field sales; have good verbal and written communication skills; and the ability to work independently and effectively.

Please email your resume at
jcmi@jcmarketinginc.com
or drop your resume at our office located at
2193 Laffet Place, Gualo Rai
(Behind Lin's Hardware)

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: DPW23-ITB NO. 42300021
SUBMISSION DATE: January 11, 2023 TIME: 10:00 A.M.
"Chalan Kanoa Road and Drainage Improvement Project, Saipan"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The project package will be available on or after **December 09, 2022** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars ($100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at DPW Technical Services Division required for each set.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **December 27, 2022**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **January 04, 2023** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division,** 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JAMES A. ADA
SECRETARY, DPW

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR,
DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES

Science & Technology

Facebook parent Meta threatens to remove news from platform

Facebook parent Meta Platforms Inc. said Tuesday it will be "forced to consider" removing news content from its platform if Congress passes legislation requiring tech companies to pay news outlets for their material.

The Journalism Competition and Preservation Act, if passed, would allow news companies to collectively negotiate with social platforms over the terms on which their material appears on their sites.

Meta said it would rather pull news from its platforms than "submit to government-mandated negotiations that unfairly disregard the value we provide to news outlets." The value, Meta said in a statement tweeted by spokesman Andy Stone, includes "increased traffic and subscriptions."

Meta, which is based in Menlo Park, California, has taken similar stands in the past. Last year, it briefly blocked news from its platform in Australia after the country passed legislation that would compel tech companies to pay publishers for using their news stories. It later struck deals with Australian publishers.

Sen. Amy Klobuchar, a Democrat from Minnesota and the bill's sponsor, said the legislation simply allows news organizations to band together to negotiate better prices for their news content with "the biggest companies the world has ever known."

"In one quarter Google made $66 billion in ad revenue while newspapers and little radio stations folded left and right," she said. "We're just simply trying to get a fair price for content." ***(AP)***

Apple: Most iCloud data can now be end-to-end encrypted

BOSTON (AP)—As part of an ongoing privacy push, Apple said Wednesday it will now offer full end-to-encryption for nearly all the data its users store in its global cloud-based storage system. That will make it more difficult for hackers, spies and law enforcement agencies to access sensitive user information.

The world's most valuable company has long placed customer security and privacy at a premium. Its iMessage and Facetime communications services are fully encrypted end-to-end and it has sometimes locked horns with law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, over its refusal to unlock devices.

AP

The Apple logo is illuminated at a store in the city center in Munich, Germany, on Dec. 16, 2020.

But a lot of what customers backed up remotely using Apple's iCloud service—including photos, videos and chats—has not been afforded uncompromising protection through end-to-end encryption, a technology that prevents even Apple from decrypting it. That has made it easier for crooks, spies—and criminal investigators with court orders—to get at it.

No longer. The loophole that law enforcement had for getting at iPhone data will now be considerably narrowed.

Apple, which is based in Cupertino, California, did not respond to requests for comment on the timing of the announcement and other issues.

The FBI expressed displeasure.

In a statement, it said it remains a strong advocate of encryption schemes that provide "lawful access by design" so tech companies "served with a legal order" can decrypt data and give it to law enforcement. The agency said it "continues to be deeply concerned with the threat end-to-end and user-only-access encryption pose," insisting they hinder the FBI's ability to protect Americans from crimes ranging from cyberattacks to violence against children, and terrorism.

Cryptographers and other cybersecurity experts have long argued, however, that attempts by law enforcement to weaken encryption with backdoors are ill-advised because they would inherently make the internet less reliable and hurt vulnerable populations including ethnic minorities.

Last year, Apple announced, then withdrew after a flood of objections, a plan to scan iPhones for photos of child sexual abuse material, or CSAM.

"Where Apple was hesitant about deploying encryption features last year—maybe even backsliding a bit with CSAM scanning proposals—it now feels like they've decided to put the gas pedal down," noted Johns Hopkins cryptography professor Matthew Green on Twitter.

Apple's encryption announcement offers what the company calls Advanced Data Protection, to which users of its devices must opt in. It adds iCloud Backup, Notes and Photos to data categories that are already protected by end-to-end encryption in the cloud, including health data and passwords. Not included in the iCloud encryption scheme are email, contacts and calendar items because they must interoperate with products from other vendors, Apple said.

It said Advanced Data Protection for iCloud would be available to U.S. users by the end of the year and start rolling out to the rest of the world in early 2023.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Statewide Independent Living Council
"Yes I Can!"
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TEL: (670) 322-6537/8 FAX: (670) 322-6548
E-MAIL: nmidir@ovrgov.net

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC §9910, the public is advised that the Statewide Independent Living Council will hold its FY 2023 First General Membership Meeting on Thursday, December 15, 2022 at Aqua Resort Club, Vino Room from 9:00 am to 11:30 am.
Interested individuals are welcome to attend.

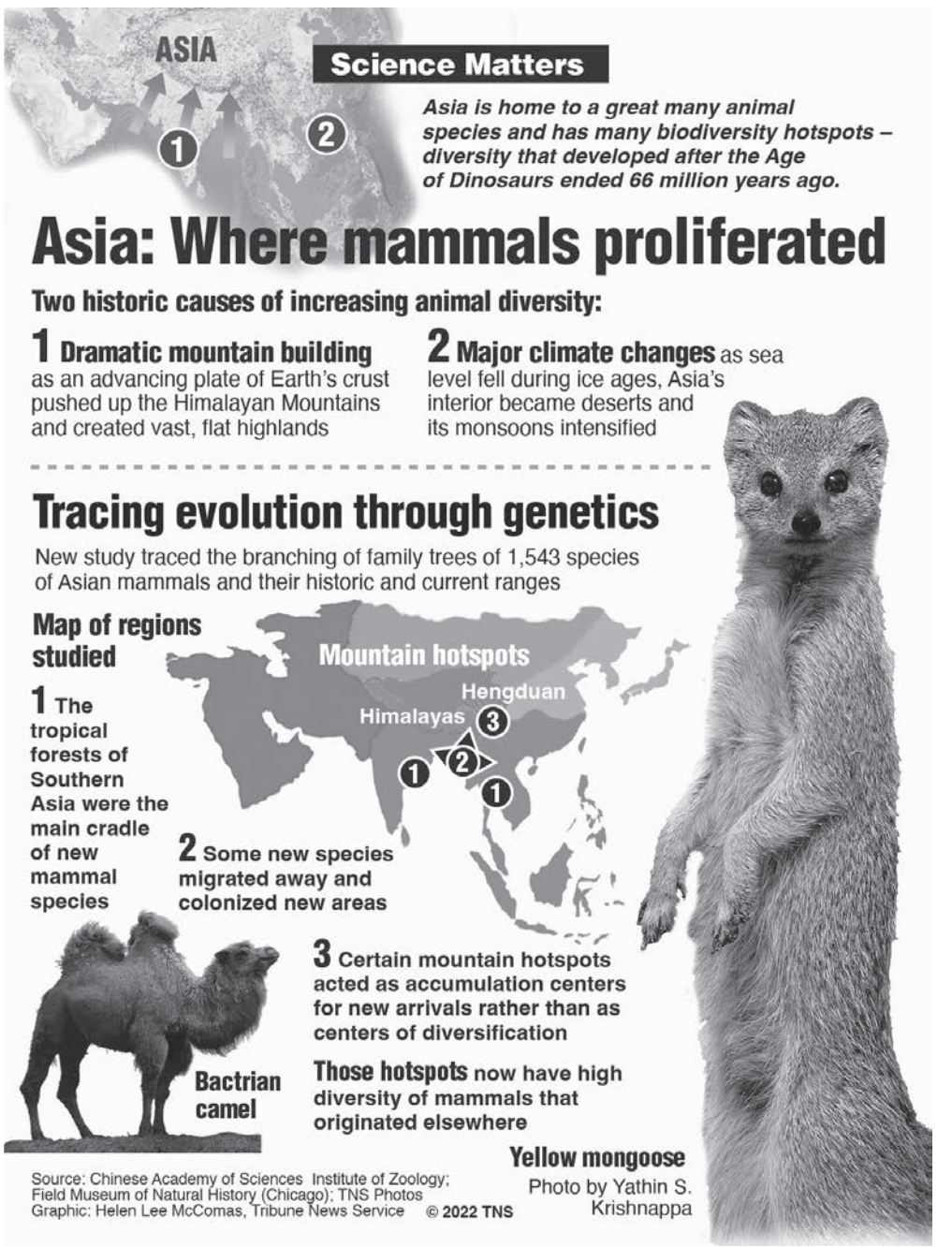
AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Roll Call
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda of December 15, 2022
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes of the FY 2022 State Rehabilitation Council and Statewide Independent Living Council Fourth General Membership Joint Meeting of September 23, 2022
V. Reports
a. SILC Chairperson
b. CLI Executive Director
c. OVR Director
VI. Old Business
a. 2022 National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) Updates
b. FY 2022 Joint Annual Report
VII. New Business
a. International Day of Persons with Disabilities
VIII. Action Items
a. Ratification and Approval of Revised FY 2023 Resource Plan
b. Election of Officers (Vice Chairperson, Fiscal Officer, and Sergeant-at-Arms)
IX. Next General Membership Meeting
X. Adjournment

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend the meeting but require accommodations-such as large print or sign language interpreters, are asked to call Ms. Jemmie Agulto at 322-6537(voice) or email jemmie@ovrgov.net for necessary arrangements no later than Monday, December 12, 2022, at 4:00 pm.

/s/ **Nicolas DLC Torres**
SILC Chairperson

Publication of this notice is paid for by federal funds made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Title VI-B Independent Living Services, ACL Grant.


ASIA
1
2
Science Matters
Asia is home to a great many animal species and has many biodiversity hotspots – diversity that developed after the Age of Dinosaurs ended 66 million years ago.
Asia: Where mammals proliferated
Two historic causes of increasing animal diversity:
1 Dramatic mountain building as an advancing plate of Earth's crust pushed up the Himalayan Mountains and created vast, flat highlands
2 Major climate changes as sea level fell during ice ages, Asia's interior became deserts and its monsoons intensified
Tracing evolution through genetics
New study traced the branching of family trees of 1,543 species of Asian mammals and their historic and current ranges
Map of regions studied
Mountain hotspots
Hengduan
Himalayas
3
2
1
1
1 The tropical forests of Southern Asia were the main cradle of new mammal species
2 Some new species migrated away and colonized new areas
3 Certain mountain hotspots acted as accumulation centers for new arrivals rather than as centers of diversification
Those hotspots now have high diversity of mammals that originated elsewhere
Bactrian camel
Yellow mongoose
Photo by Yathin S. Krishnappa
Source: Chinese Academy of Sciences Institute of Zoology; Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago); TNS Photos
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Tribune News Service © 2022 TNS

Life & Style

Charlize Theron honored at Women in Entertainment gala

LOS ANGELES (AP)—For once, Charlize Theron has begun to witness more women in power roles with the film industry.

"Women are tearing down the whole … building," Theron said after she received the prestigious Sherry Lansing Leadership Award at The Hollywood Reporter's Women in Entertainment breakfast gala Wednesday in Los Angeles. The Oscar winner was handed the award by her friend Seth Rogen for excelling as a trailblazer and her philanthropy work in Hollywood.

Theron praised female leaders who have paved ways as heads of studio departments, directors, producers and those that have created their own production companies. She said women should lean on each other as resources to strengthen their voices.

"I want us to keep each other accountable, use each other as resources and push each other to keep using our voices and platforms for something greater than ourselves," Theron said. The actor said she's been inspired by young people through her Charlize Theron Africa Outreach Project, which is an organization dedicated to making a difference for people in South Africa.

Theron

"In the face of what we would consider adversity or concrete ceilings, they see opportunity and room for change, growth and inclusion," Theron said.

Previous honorees include Oprah Winfrey, Meryl Streep, Viola Davis, Reese Witherspoon, Jennifer Anniston and Barbra Streisand.

In a heartfelt speech, Rogen called Theron the most impressive person he has been around. He then joked about how he's physically intimidated to work with Theron on a project because "she murders people in every movie she does."

Rogen's joke drew a collective laugh from the audience. The actor delivered more comic relief when he jokingly took a jab at an absent Kim Kardashian, who was a scheduled presenter at the event.

"I have seen every episode of 'Keeping Up with the Kardashians.' I know she's not doing something more important than this," Rogen said as the audience members laughed and applauded. He then added: "She's never done nothing more important than this."

Theron praised the work of Issa Rae, who was earlier honored with the Equity in Entertainment Award, which recognized her for amplifying the voices of underrepresented communities in the entertainment industry.

Microsoft strikes 10-year deal with Nintendo on Call of Duty

LONDON (AP)—Microsoft agreed Wednesday to make the hit video game Call of Duty available on Nintendo for 10 years should its $69 billion purchase of game maker Activision Blizzard go through—an apparent attempt to fend off objections from rival Sony.

The blockbuster merger is facing close scrutiny from regulators in the U.S., Europe and elsewhere. Microsoft, maker of the Xbox game console, faces resistance from Sony, which makes the competing PlayStation console and has raised concerns with antitrust watchdogs about losing access to what it calls a "must-have" game title.

Phil Spencer, the head of Xbox, tweeted that Microsoft "entered into a 10-year commitment" to bring Call of Duty to Nintendo.

Microsoft President Brad Smith tweeted his thanks to Nintendo, which makes the Switch game console, saying the same offer was available for Sony.

"Any day @Sony wants to sit down and talk, we'll be happy to hammer out a 10-year deal for PlayStation as well," he said.

Smith said the agreement would bring Call of Duty to more gamers and more platforms, and "that's good for competition and good for consumers."

Sony's European press office didn't respond to a request for comment. Adding to the pressure on Sony, Microsoft also said Wednesday it has committed to keeping Call of Duty on the platform Steam, a digital marketplace for PC games, in an agreement with Steam's operator Valve.

In an op-ed for The Wall Street Journal this week, Smith raised concerns about the possibility that the Federal Trade Commission could take Microsoft to court to stop the deal. Antitrust watchdogs in both Britain and the European Union also are investigating the transaction over concerns it would distort competition.

Ludacris, Mercedes-Benz grant holiday wishes with new shoes

ATLANTA, Ga (AP)—Just in time for the holidays, Ludacris and Mercedes-Benz have surprised schoolchildren in Atlanta with more than 500 new pairs of shoes.

"It's all about giving kids moments that they're going to remember for the rest of their lives," Ludacris said Wednesday at Miles Elementary School. "And I think today is one of those days that just coming here and seeing the smiles on their faces and making sure that, you know, everything is just given to them and knowing that we're here to help and we're here to encourage them."

The rapper and entertainer said he'd remember the day for the rest of his life, too.

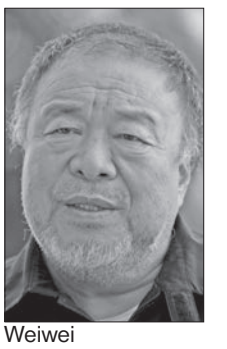
The car company's holiday giving program, Season to Shine, partnered with nonprofit Shoes That Fit to provide kids with new athletic shoes to attend school. Mercedes also partnered with its brand ambassador Ludacris and his foundation, The Ludacris Foundation, to deliver the shoes to the elementary school Wednesday.

Since 1992, Shoes That Fit has provided over 2 million pairs of brand-new shoes and other necessities to children across the United States.

Dissident artist Ai Weiwei says China unrest won't alter regime

MONTEMOR-O-NOVO, Portugal (AP)—Dissident Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei is taking heart from recent public protests in China over the authorities' strict COVID-19 policy, but he doesn't see them bringing about any significant political change.

"I don't think that's possible," he told The Associated Press in an interview at his home in Portugal.


Weiwei

The recent unrest in several Chinese cities that has questioned Beijing's authority—going so far as to demand President Xi Jinping's resignation in what have been the boldest protests in decades—is "a big deal," Ai acknowledges. But it is unlikely to go further, he says.

Challenges to Chinese Communist Party rule are routinely snuffed out with whatever degree of brutality is required. Ai points, for example, to how Beijing cracked down on Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement two years ago.

In his view, some "realistic thinking" is required.

"Everything is about control ... to guarantee the whole nation will follow (Xi's) direction," the 65-year-old said in the interview Tuesday at his country house about 100 kilometers (60 miles) east of Lisbon, the Portuguese capital.

His 2020 documentary "Coronation," about the lockdown in Wuhan, China, during the COVID-19 outbreak, illustrated the country's ruthlessly efficient and brutal official response to the pandemic.

The Chinese government's "zero-COVID" policy included harsh measures that, according to Ai, kept some people confined to their apartments for 100 straight days.

Strangers saw conversation in vastly different lights

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend of two years works for a company with 160 employees, 95 miles from our town. He held a party at a restaurant located near the company. I knew no one and doubt very much I will ever run into these people again.

While I was at the party, I met a young woman who, like myself, was there with her boyfriend and didn't know anyone. We chatted for half an hour about the holidays and made general conversation. When she mentioned she had been recently diagnosed with a condition I have, too, I gave her some websites to check out for information and told her not to worry. I also told her that if I can be well and deal with this issue, anyone can. Our conversation lasted about 15 minutes, and I asked no personal questions. When I had to leave the party, she remained sitting by herself and started playing with her phone.

The next day, my boyfriend was angry because upon leaving with her boyfriend, the woman told him, "Your girlfriend kept nagging me about my condition and wouldn't shut up." I was dumbfounded and hurt. I was trying to be nice. Why did my boyfriend tell me? He said nothing to her to defend me. Even worse, what did he accomplish by repeating what she had said? He knew it would make me feel bad. I'll never run into these people again. Am I wrong in feeling hurt?

DUMBFOUNDED IN THE EAST

DEAR DUMBFOUNDED: I am still trying to figure out why someone would tell a stranger at a party her medical status and then take offense if the person tried to be helpful. If what you were saying made her uncomfortable, she should have said it to you, not your boyfriend. You aren't wrong for feeling hurt. However, you ARE wrong to blame your boyfriend for telling you something he thought you needed to hear. That's what people who love each other do.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: My partner and I have been together for 11 years, living together for seven. He's a Realtor in his hometown. I had a stroke four years ago, which forced me into early retirement. Real estate is a dog-eat-dog occupation. Paychecks are few and far between, so I pay the rent and all the household bills. He pays his personal bills and the costs of doing business as a Realtor.

He is currently broke and doesn't have the money to pay his personal bills. I refuse to pay them. I think he should get a part-time job to pay his own bills, but he refuses. Of course, there will be a backlash, and he'll blame me. He will lose his car, telephone, real estate license, health and car insurance, etc.

I have bailed him out before, but I am no longer willing to do it because I'm running out of what money I had set aside for retirement. He already owes me thousands of dollars in several loans, which I don't expect to recover. What do I do? I don't want to split up or continue to argue over this.

PLANNING AHEAD

DEAR PLANNING: Your "partner" refuses to look for a part-time job so he can be self-supporting and not dependent on you? Dear lady, you may not want to split up after this amount of time, but your partner is a luxury you can no longer afford. Stop arguing, accept it and move on.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: What is a proper tip to leave a server at an all-you-can-eat buffet? They bring water and bus the table, but we get our own food and drinks. They certainly don't work as hard as servers in a sit-down restaurant.

WONDERING IN THE EAST

DEAR WONDERING: The employees you describe are also "working hard." If you're eating in the restaurant, leave a couple of dollars for the bussers who are clearing the dishes. If you receive service IN ADDITION to that, leave 10%.

1130 Walnut, Kansas City, MO 64106; 816-581-7500

■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

LOOK AT THIS GREAT SNOWBALL.! I'D SURE LIKE TO PASTE SOMEONE UPSIDE THE HEAD WITH IT.
...BUT I FIGURE EACH SNOWBALL I THROW MEANS I'LL GET ONE LESS PRESENT FROM SANTA.
I WISH I KNEW IF SANTA WAS BRINGING ME ANY UNDERWEAR.
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12-9

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

I'M THROWING A CHRISTMAS PARTY. WANT TO COME?
CAN I SLEEP THROUGH IT?
OF COURSE
I'LL BE THERE!
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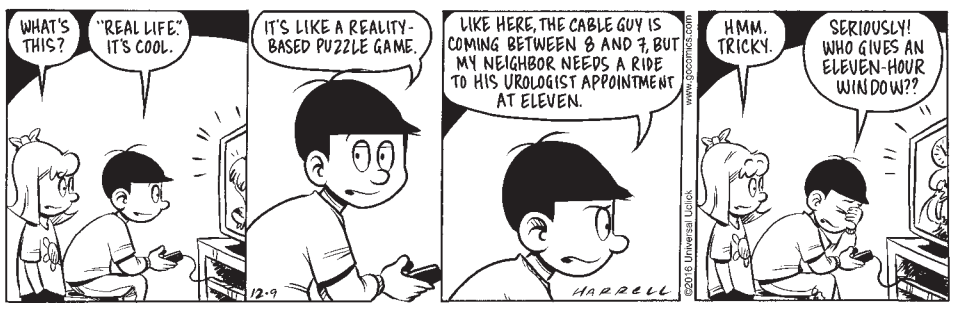
Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication
JIM DAVIS 12-9

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


WHAT'S THIS?
"REAL LIFE." IT'S COOL.
IT'S LIKE A REALITY-BASED PUZZLE GAME.
LIKE HERE, THE CABLE GUY IS COMING BETWEEN 8 AND 7, BUT MY NEIGHBOR NEEDS A RIDE TO HIS UROLOGIST APPOINTMENT AT ELEVEN.
HMM. TRICKY.
SERIOUSLY! WHO GIVES AN ELEVEN-HOUR WINDOW??
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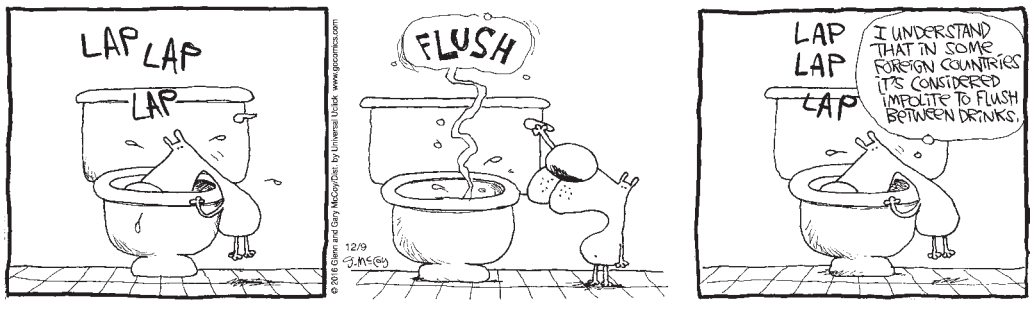
12-9
HARRELL

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Broadband letters
4 Squealer
7 Wee hr.
12 Slangy suffix
13 Sch. founded by Jefferson
14 Mrs. Flintstone
15 Pallid
16 Ice-cream cone order
18 JFK info
19 "Holy smokes!"
20 Floral garlands
22 Lair
23 Curly cabbage
27 Existed
29 Vienna's river
31 Host
34 Access the web
35 African desert
37 Lawn coating
38 Editor's "keep it"
39 The Browns, on scoreboards
41 Zilch
45 Expensive violin
47 Distant
48 Orange liqueur
52 Sailor
53 Seoul setting
54 "For shame!"
55 Green prefix
56 Adolescents
57 Hog haven
58 "Fresh Air" airer

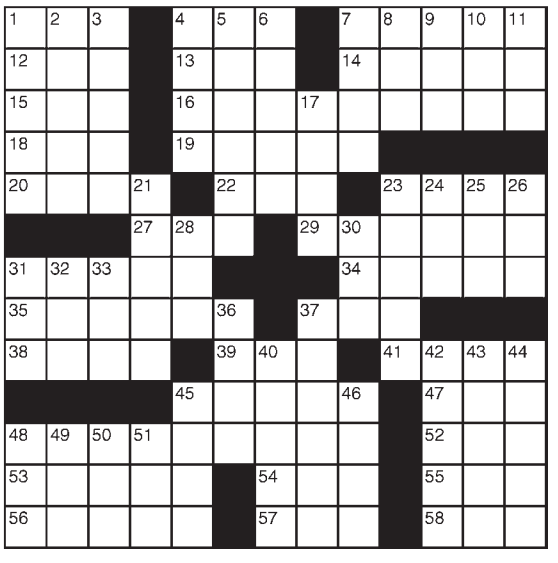
DOWN

1 Wooden peg
2 Roofing material
3 Island porch
4 Sean Astin film
5 Sidesteps
6 Hosiery shade
7 They give a hoot
8 Never, in Bonn
9 Days of yore
10 French pal
11 Atlas page
17 Flex
21 Perspire
23 Recognized
24 Calendar abbr.
25 Wall St. deal
26 Still, in verse
28 — Lingus
30 Pub serving
31 Twisty letter
32 Yoga pad
33 "Evita" role
36 Pinnacle
37 Abhor
40 Endures
42 Frequently
43 Civil rights org.
44 Goof
45 "Sad to say ..."
46 Gross
48 B'way show purchase
49 Sturgeon product
50 Hot temper
51 Signing need

Solution time: 25 mins.

I	L	K	■	A	L	I	E	■	C	C	V	I
R	Y	E	■	M	I	N	G	■	H	A	I	R
K	E	N	T	U	C	K	Y	■	E	S	S	O
■	■	D	I	S	■	S	P	A	R	T	A	N
H	U	R	L	E	D	■	T	H	U	■	■	■
A	L	I	■	D	U	M	■	A	B	U	T	S
I	N	C	H	■	O	A	T	■	S	N	A	P
L	A	K	E	S	■	C	O	N	■	S	C	I
■	■	■	R	A	H	■	T	E	A	P	O	T
S	A	N	D	L	O	T	■	S	R	O	■	■
A	L	A	I	■	M	I	S	T	A	K	E	N
M	A	N	N	■	E	V	E	L	■	E	T	A
S	N	A	G	■	R	O	W	E	■	N	E	T

Yesterday's answer 12-9



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Simon Helberg, 42; Donny Osmond, 65; Beau Bridges, 81; Dame Judi Dench, 88.

Happy Birthday: Refrain from letting sensitivity be your downfall. Take a cautious approach to whatever you encounter and consider what's true before you pass the information along. Be smart, safe and secure in handling money, health and contracts. Make your vision clear to others and do what you can to turn your dream into a reality. Say no to decadent behavior. Your numbers are 3, 10, 17, 26, 39, 42, 49.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Trips, seminars, meetings or anything that gives you the wisdom and knowledge required to follow through with your plans is encouraged. A personal pick-me-up will boost your ego and give you the confidence to share your thoughts and feelings. ✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Inconsistency will stand between you and your objective. Keep your emotions in check, and don't make changes or purchases you can't afford. Be a reasonable observer, and you'll learn something valuable. Slow down; time is on your side. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Use your wisdom, experience, and connections to help you manage your life, finances and relationships. Ask questions and offer suggestions; something good will develop. Leave nothing to chance or up to someone else if you want to excel. Question unstable partnerships. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Emotions will surface quickly, and control will be necessary if you want to avoid sensitive issues. Go over what transpired and assess the situation before you take sides or make a move. Speak from the heart, but stick to the facts. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Set your sights on something, and don't stop until you reach your destination. A hands-on approach will give others a chance to witness your skills and enjoy the process by which you gain ground. Mix business with pleasure and form new friendships. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Strive for perfection in all you do, and you won't be disappointed. A change of attitude will develop as you gather information about work or one of your colleagues. Leave nothing to chance or in someone else's hands. Keep the peace. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Strategize, and you'll devise a plan that excites you. Gather information and proceed to dazzle friends, relatives and peers. A reunion or conference will encourage you to set high standards and reach for the stars. Set a new trend. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Money and emotions won't mix. Don't feel you have to pay for others or spend to impress. Trying to buy love won't make you feel good about yourself. Concentrate on who you are, what you have to offer and pursuing knowledge. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* A change will inspire you. Say yes to time spent with someone who brings out the best in you; the talks you have will lead to exciting prospects. Do only what you can afford, and you'll avoid money worries. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Keep your opinions to yourself, and don't believe everything you hear. Expect someone to exaggerate or use unfair tactics to get you to reveal sensitive information. Stick close to home and surround yourself with trustworthy people. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Host an event, entertain people you want to partner with or make your home a sanctuary where you feel relaxed. Discuss your intentions with someone you love to find out where you stand. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Take it easy, listen and choose to be helpful and make a difference. How you handle requests and take care of responsibilities will determine what others will do for you in return. Embrace positive change and walk away from negativity. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are wise, diligent and flexible. You are unique and protective.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

7		8	3					5
	6		8	2	9			
			4					
4								3
			1	8	3			
5								7
					6			
			5	1	8		2	
1					7	8		4

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 12/09

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

5	7	8	6	4	9	2	3	1
6	9	3	1	2	8	7	5	4
1	2	4	7	3	5	9	8	6
8	1	7	4	6	2	3	9	5
9	5	6	8	7	3	4	1	2
4	3	2	9	5	1	8	6	7
7	8	1	2	9	6	5	4	3
2	6	5	3	8	4	1	7	9
3	4	9	5	1	7	6	2	8

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

SUN CYCLES Solution: 5 letters

T	N	G	N	I	D	N	E	C	N	E	I	C	S	T
N	I	O	E	C	N	A	R	A	E	P	P	A	Y	S
M	O	M	I	R	I	C	I	D	O	I	R	E	P	A
I	E	I	E	T	W	D	E	E	G	A	L	P	U	C
N	P	D	T	S	P	E	I	C	F	L	O	W	O	E
I	O	H	F	A	C	U	L	A	E	N	O	M	R	R
M	T	S	O	A	I	A	R	Y	G	O	P	A	G	O
U	O	T	P	T	R	D	L	E	S	R	S	X	D	F
M	S	S	A	O	O	E	A	E	E	T	A	I	E	L
A	I	R	R	N	A	S	A	R	S	H	X	M	G	A
U	R	U	T	R	O	O	P	E	A	K	U	U	R	R
N	A	B	T	U	V	S	T	H	G	I	L	M	A	E
D	L	H	T	I	E	L	E	V	E	N	F	R	H	S
E	O	H	E	S	E	C	N	E	R	R	U	C	C	O
R	S	W	I	T	C	H	M	E	D	I	E	V	A	L

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Aperiodic, Appearance, Aurora, Bursts, Charged, Decay, Diagram, Earth, Eleven, Ending, Eruption, Faculae, Flares, Flux, Forecast, Gases, Group, Isotope, Lights, Loops, Maunder, Maximum, Medieval, Minimum, Modern, NASA, North, Occurrence, Oort, Peak, Photosphere, Plage, Radiation, Science, Solar, South, Space, Switch, Timescale, View, Wind, Wolf

Yesterday's Answer: Dorian Gray

Purchase **THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 56 through 70,** in time for the holidays at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

NBA-leading Celtics embarrass sloppy Suns in blowout

PHOENIX (AP),Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown each scored 25 points, Malcolm Brodgon added 16 off the bench and the Boston Celtics embarrassed the Phoenix Suns 125-98 on Wednesday night.

The Celtics won for the eighth time in nine games, improving their NBA-best record to 21-5. The Suns — who came into the game with the best record in a crowded Western Conference race — lost for the third time in four games.

The expected showdown between two of the league's top teams never materialized with the Celtics leading by 45 points. The Celtics took a 31-21 lead after one quarter over the cold-shooting Suns, who missed all eight of their 3-point attempts.

Boston continued to build its lead in the second, taking a 69-42 lead into the break. Brown led the Celtics with 17 points in the first half, while Tatum scored had 14. Grant Williams and Brogdon both added 12.

The second half was essentially an afterthought. Tatum hit a free throw with 7:01 left in the third to push Boston's advantage to 40.

The Suns welcomed back All-Star point guard Chris Paul, who missed the past 14 games with a sore right heel. That's good news for the team's long-term prognosis, but it didn't help much Wednesday. Josh Okogie led the Suns with a career-high 28 points off the bench.

AP

Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum (0) drives between Phoenix Suns guard Devin Booker (1) and center Jock Landale during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022, in Phoenix.

Nets 122, Hornets 116

In New York, Kyrie Irving scored 33 points, Kevin Durant had 29 and Brooklyn outlasted Charlotte.

Seth Curry added 20 points on 8-for-11 shooting to help the Nets won for the fifth time in six games.

Terry Rozier scored 30 points and Kelly Oubre Jr. had 29 for the Hornets. They have lost three straight and seven of 10.

Brooklyn led by 23 points at the start of the third quarter, but was outscored 32-23 in the period. The Hornets cut it to 109-107 with 6:28 left in the game.

Raptors 126, Lakers 113

In Toronto, Pascal Siakam had 25 points and 10 rebounds and Toronto routed a short-handed Los Angeles team playing without LeBron James and Anthony Davis.

James sat out because of a sore left ankle, one night after he played 36 minutes in a 116-102 loss at Cleveland. Davis left after one quarter Tuesday night because of a non-COVID illness.

Some in the sellout crowd of 19,800 booed when the names of the injured players were displayed on the video board before the game.

Fred VanVleet also had 25 points for Toronto. Dennis Schroder led the Lakers with 18.

Jazz 124, Warriors 123

In Salt Lake City, Simone Fontecchio dunked with 1.4 seconds remaining off Nickeil Alexander-Walker's steal and Utah beat Golden State in a matchup of short-handed teams.

Stephen Curry, Draymond Green and Andrew Wiggins sat out for Golden State, while Utah was missing Lauri Markkanen and Mike Conley. Curry skipped the game because of soreness in his left ankle, Green has tightness in his left hip and Andrew Wiggins has a strained right adductor. For Utah, Markkanen was ill and Conley has an injured left knee.

Jordan Clarkson led Utah with 22 points. Fontecchio finished with a career-high 18 points. A rookie from Italy who will be 27 on Friday, he made four 3-pointers.

Jordan Poole tied a season high with 36 points for Golden State and Jonathan Kuminga had a season-high 24.

Bucks 126, Kings 113

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 35 points, Jrue Holiday added 31 and Milwaukee beat Sacramento for the Bucks' 13th consecutive victory over the Kings.

The streak is Milwaukee's longest active streak against an opponent. The Bucks have won 12 straight against Orlando.

Brook Lopez had 17 points and nine rebounds and Khris Middleton added 14 points for the Bucks. They won their third straight to improve to 18-6.

Domantas Sabonis had 23 points and 12 rebounds for the Kings, who had won their last three. Harrison Barnes had 20 points, and Malik Monk added 16.

Grizzlies 123, Thunder 102

In Memphis, Tenn., Ja Morant had 26 points, 13 rebounds and 11 assists and Memphis used a second-half flurry to beat Oklahoma City.

Morant's triple-double was his second this season and the seventh of his career, and tied a career high for rebounds. Dillon Brooks added 24 points and Brandon Clarke finished with 17 points as the Grizzlies won their season-best fourth straight.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander led the Thunder with 26 points.

Knicks 113, Hawks 89

In New York, Julius Randle had 34 points and 17 rebounds and New York capitalized on another key Atlanta injury to coast past the Hawks.

Trae Young showed up wearing sneakers in the Knicks' blue-and-orange colors with "King of Broadway" on them, but he was left largely having to win this one alone after the Hawks lost a third starter when Dejounte Murray sprained his left ankle after 3 1/2 minutes.

Already without starting forwards John Collins and De'Andre Hunter, the Hawks trailed by as many as 28 points in their fifth loss in seven games. Young finished with 19 points and six assists.

Timberwolves 121, Pacers 115

In Minneapolis, D'Angelo Russell had 15 of his 28 points in the fourth quarter, Anthony Edwards scored 26 points and Minnesota held on to beat Indiana.

Rudy Gobert added 16 points and 20 rebounds for Minnesota, which blew a 23-point lead and had to overcome an eight-point deficit. The Timberwolves — who had 23 turnovers — won for just the second time in six games.

Buddy Hield scored 26 points and hit 7 of 11 from 3-point territory for Indiana. Tyrese Haliburton had 26 points and 15 assists for the Pacers.

Magic 116, Clippers 111, OT

In Orlando, Fla., rookie Pablo Banchero scored 10 of his 23 points in overtime and Orlando beat Los Angeles to snap a nine-game losing streak.

Banchero, the top overall pick in the NBA draft, made all six of his free throws in the final seven seconds of overtime, rallying the Magic from a 111-110 deficit.

Terrance Mann came off the bench to lead the Clippers with 19 points.

Bulls 115, Wizards 111

In Chicago, DeMar DeRozan scored 15 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter, Nikola Vucevic had 25 points and 11 rebounds and Chicago beat Washington.

The Wizards lost their fourth in a row and played without leading scorer and three-time All-Star Bradley Beal. He strained his hamstring Sunday in a loss to the Los Angeles Lakers.

Kristaps Porzingis had 28 points and nine rebounds for Washington.

Pelicans 104, Pistons 98

In New Orleans, Zion Williamson had 29 points and 10 rebounds and New Orleans beat Detroit for its fifth straight victory and 10th in 12 games.

Trey Murphy III, a 2021 first-round draft choice starting because of Brandon Ingram's left foot injury, hit four 3s and had 20 points for New Orleans.

Saddiq Bey, who scored 25 points for Detroit.

NBA adds Maurice Podoloff Trophy for team with best record

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

There's now another trophy for NBA teams to chase.

The league announced Tuesday that the team with the best regular season record will now receive The Maurice Podoloff Trophy, named for the first commissioner of the NBA.

And that name strongly suggests that another trophy tweak is coming—since until last season, the league's MVP trophy was named for Podoloff. Denver's Nikola Jokic received the Podoloff Trophy when he won his first MVP award in 2021; when he won MVP again last season, he also received a crystal ball amid a leaguewide redesign of many trophies.

The new Podoloff Trophy has a crystal ball cut into 82 panels—a nod to the 82-game regular season—and sits atop a pedestal that combines the structures of the Eastern Conference posts and Western Conference rings.

The league also unveiled several more redesigned trophies Tuesday. The Joe Dumars Trophy for sportsmanship, The Red Auerbach Trophy for coach of the year, The Twyman-Stokes Trophy for the league's best teammate and the NBA Executive of the Year Trophy all have new looks. Each features an embedment inside a 15-inch crystal net structure.

"Winning the first NBA Sportsmanship Award and being the trophy's namesake are among the greatest honors of my career," said Dumars, who is now an NBA Executive Vice President and the league's head of basketball operations. "The reimagined trophies represent the enduring legacy of past recipients and are a fitting way to honor those who will continue to raise the standard of excellence in our game."

Last season, the league changed the look of the NBA's championship trophy, The Larry O'Brien, with the golden ball atop it now tilting in a different direction than the previous version and with a rounded base instead of the square one that the trophy had for decades.

It also made design changes for many other awards, including the Bill Russell NBA Finals MVP trophy along with the Eastern Conference and Western Conference championship trophies — naming them for Bob Cousy and Oscar Robertson, respectively. The league also added two new prizes last season, the Larry Bird Trophy for East finals MVP and the Magic Johnson Trophy for West finals MVP.

All the trophies handed out at All-Star weekend, including the Kobe Bryant MVP award, were also redesigned last season. The league also began issuing divisional championship trophies, naming them for Nat "Sweetwater" Clifton (Atlantic Division), Wayne Embry (Central), Earl Lloyd (Southeast), Willis Reed (Southwest), Sam Jones (Northwest) and Chuck Cooper (Pacific).

Irving touts freedom on game sneakers after split with Nike

Kyrie Irving is a sneaker free agent and he used the Brooklyn Nets' game Wednesday night to advertise it.

Irving played with tape covering the logo on his black sneakers, two days after Nike ended its relationship with him.

"I AM FREE Thank you God … I AM," was written in gold marker on the sneakers during the Nets' 122-116 victory over Charlotte. The other side read "logo here."

Nike had suspended its relationship with Irving last month as part of the fallout from him tweeting a link to a film containing antisemitic material. The apparel maker then announced this week that the split would be permanent.

Irving had been a Nike athlete throughout his career and the company had been set to release the Kyrie 8. His agent, Shetellia Riley Irving, had said the split was mutual and it's one Irving seems to be celebrating.

One post on his Twitter page Monday said that nothing was more priceless "than being free." In other, he thanked anyone who had spent money on anything he released and added that it was "time to show how powerful we are as a community." (AP)

NICKY

From Page 24

third set, and won the final playoff set after reaching 15 points first.

Martindale and Nichols bounced back from their two consecutive losses and tag-teamed their way against Dunlop and Alcorn with their speedy footwork and hard smashes, which Dunlop and Alcorn were unable to recover from. They were as serious as could be on the court, but they were all smiles afterwards, congratulating each other on a great game.

For the other matchups throughout the tournament, in the open singles, Martindale won first place against Eric Abraham, 11-4, 11-3.

In the 4.5 mixed doubles, Alcorn and Mary Rose Alvarez won first place after defeating Roy Pangelinan and Chelsea Henzon in a best-of-three match, 11-9,11-6,11-4, and won the finals, 15-3.

In the 4.0 women's doubles, the strong duo of Marivic Dunlop and Rowena Houck overpowered the mother-and-daughter tandem of Joane Henzon and Chelsea Henzon, 15-3 in the finals.

In the 3.5 men's doubles, the father-and-son duo of Ray Austin and John Riley Austin climbed their way to first place against Patrick Quimby and Gregg Clark, 11-4, 8-11, 11-7.

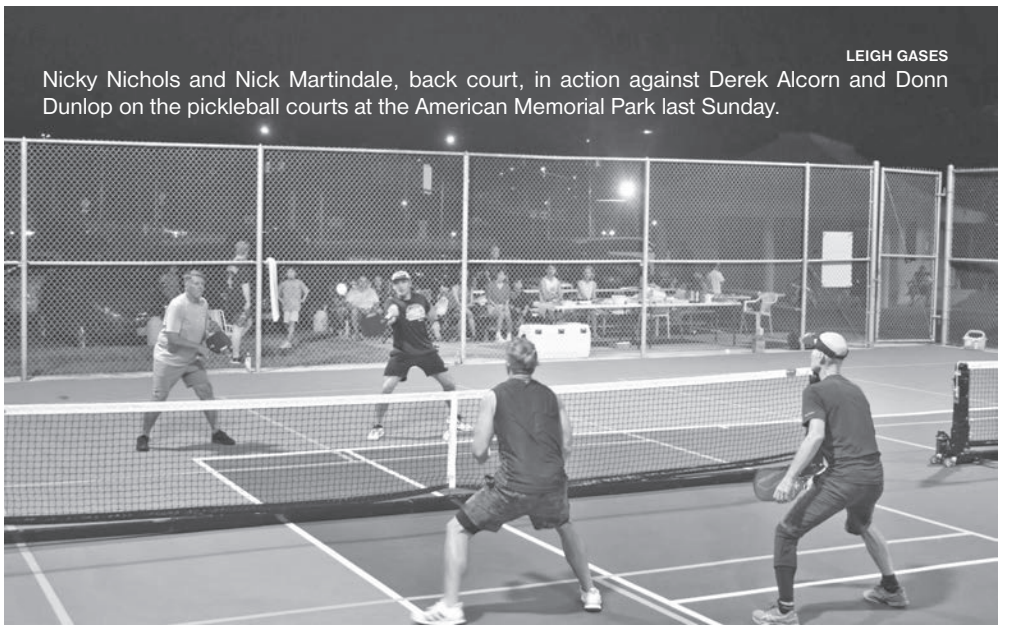
For the 3.5 mixed doubles round-robin match, Narlo and Yun Hee Dean won first place.

The 2.5 mixed doubles first place went to Patrick Quimby and Lydia Li after defeating Jojo Valencia and Ruby Gozon, 11-3, 11-4, 15-11.

The 2.5 men's doubles round-robin match first place went to D.J. Arriola and Daniel Yoon after beating John Riley Austin and Doha Lim, 2-0.

For the 2.5 women's doubles match, Sharon Abragan and Miles Guerrerro won over Ruby Gozon and Leslie Rodriguez.

The skill ratings for pickleball players range from 5.5—meaning this player is a top caliber player level, down to 1.0—meaning this player is just starting to play pickleball and has little understanding of the rules.



LEIGH GASES

Nicky Nichols and Nick Martindale, back court, in action against Derek Alcorn and Donn Dunlop on the pickleball courts at the American Memorial Park last Sunday.

Martindale, a firefighter and pickleballer from Washington state who comes to Saipan occasionally to visit family, said after the game that "it was a great battle... awesome little tournament that these guys all put on. I just came and played so [I'm] super fortunate to be part of this. These guys created a good community… It was awesome."

When asked what his background was with the sport, he said "these guys kind of relit my flame when I visited last year. My wife's from here and I just looked up pickleball and sure enough, they had a group that was playing up on Capitol Hill and so yeah, that kind of re-sparked my interest in pickleball. It's [an] awesome community. I have a blast doing it, so it's super fun for me… everyone's always in a good mood, it's a good time [and] people got the pot-luck going."

He credits Marivic Dunlop, Donn Dunlop, Nicky Nichols, and Nelson Krum for "putting this whole thing together and [keeping pickleball] alive."

His partner, Nichols said "We're so glad he came to play. He played out here with us last year for about three weeks. When he came out, we were still not quite as good as we are now and our game level rose because of playing with him… I was really lucky to have him as a partner."

Marivic Dunlop, who was the tournament director and a PFNMI board member, said after the game that "the tournament is organized just for fun with all the members, because we [were] not able to do the Marianas Cup tournament. We put it all together with the help of a lot of the members and the board members also, and it turned out to be great. It's not perfect, but everyone did have a great time."

There are currently 150 plus members and growing, with Dunlop inviting everyone to try the sport out saying, "come and join us! That's the goal… to get the community to come and play with us… have fun and exercise."

The PFNMI has plans to put together another tournament next February with Guam pickleball players again.

ISAIAH

From Page 24

the water.

"There is no doubt that Isaiah is the highest level athlete in CNMI sports history. We've been raising him since he was 4 years old, and we've also raised him carefully and lovingly with goals for each age."

Truth be told, Kimura said Aleksenko could've made his national team debut three years ago—he's just that fantastic a swimmer. But Tsunami Saipan held him back so that his mental state could catch up with his physical attributes.

"At the age of 13, he was already at the level of the CNMI national team, but in consideration for his mental growth, we had kept him until this time. Now that he is 16 years old, our Isaiah is ready to swim in the World Championships. We've never seen such high potential in a swimmer like Isaiah. He has grown steadily and achieved results at each age group, and has reached great potential today," said Kimura.

He thanked Aleksenko's mother Yulia for raising him well and becoming the talented swimmer he is today.

"My pride is beyond description. However, I sincerely thank his mom for letting him continue swimming so far and I really want to say congratulations! Without the understanding and cooperation of Yulia and their trust in me, Isaiah would not be what he is today."

For his part, Aleksenko thanked Kimura for his mentorship and his mother for nurturing his extraordinary swimming talent.

The 16-year-old knows that he's yet to reach his full potential as a swimmer though.

"My strengths would probably my mindset when it comes to a race and my weaknesses would be not being able to keep my emotions straight when not getting a good time or getting a disqualification because if I get a worse time or get disqualified it just means I didn't practice enough or didn't do good in the race itself," he said in acknowledging the chink in his armor.

Aleksenko's mother said she couldn't be more proud of how her once unruly son has blossomed to become the future of CNMI swimming.

"I'm so proud of my son Isaiah and the Team NMI swimmers for representing us in the World Championships. They have worked so hard in spite of everything. Thank you coach Hiro for getting them this far and helping to make our dreams come true. I wish you all the best of luck. Have fun and safe travels!"

On getting kicked out of his first swimming team, Isaiah's mother gave some clarity on the issue.

"He was not really kicked out. Usually kids start at the age of 5… It was difficult to teach him because he didn't listen and was active and too young. [The coach] I believe she nicely explained that it's not yet time to start training, and she advised me to bring him back at 5 years old…but yes he was very active and also naughty."

Yulia, however, credits Kimura for Isaiah's development and potential not only as a swimmer but as a person.

"It's true coach Hiro was very careful, kind, and patient with Isaiah. He knew Isaiah was raised without a dad and Isaiah from the beginning treated him like his own father," she said.

Isaiah Aleksenko and Kimura, along with Jinnosuke Suzuki, Maria Batallones, and Shoko Litulumar, leave for the Land Down Under this morning.

WORLD

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has had its share of them, beating Spain in the round of 16 on Tuesday to become the first Arab nation to reach the World Cup quarterfinals. The Moroccans, who also became only the fourth African team to reach this stage, beat the 2010 champions in a penalty shootout.

"What they've done today is extraordinary," Morocco coach Walid Regragui said after the match.

In the group stage, Saudi Arabia caused one of the biggest upsets in tournament history by beating Argentina in its opening match. Japan beat both Germany and Spain. The Germans and 2018 semi-finalist Belgium both were eliminated before the knockout rounds.

Argentina, with Lionel Messi still looking to win a World Cup title, still made it through and then beat Australia to get into the last eight. Brazil, which had Neymar back in the lineup after an ankle injury, is there as well.

And so is defending champion France, with Kylian Mbappe seemingly unstoppable, England, Croatia, the Netherlands and, of course, Portugal — with or without Cristiano Ronaldo in the starting lineup.

CROATIA vs. BRAZIL

Five-time champion Brazil looks ready to go deep at this year's World Cup, with Neymar recovered from an ankle injury and the country's greatest player, Pele, an inspiration as he watches from his hospital bed.

The 82-year-old soccer great is receiving treatment in Sao Paulo as he recovers from a respiratory infection that was aggravated by COVID-19, but his presence can be felt among Brazil's players and fans, with banners, flags and T-shirts bearing his image.

On the field, Neymar and Co. are serious contenders, beating South Korea 4-1 in the round of 16.

"They are bold, they try one-on-one moves, feints, they are aggressive. It's impressive," Brazil coach Tite said.

Croatia is an aging team but has the knowhow at the World Cup after reaching the semifinals four years ago.

NETHERLANDS vs. ARGENTINA

Argentina has recovered from one of the biggest upsets in World Cup history and now faces the Netherlands for a place in the semifinals.

For Argentina to win its third World Cup, expect Messi to provide the magic.

The problem is, however, Messi is no longer at his peak — even if his country remains as reliant on him as ever and he has managed to score three goals so far in Qatar.

Argentina's fans have also played a part in inspiring the team.

"This is a unique moral boost. I'd like (it if) everybody could experience what a player feels when he sees all these people and thinks his country is behind him," Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni said. "They make you want to go out and celebrate."

The Netherlands has been quietly effective in reaching the quarterfinals, winning Group A and then beating the United States 3-1 in the round of 16.

These teams have plenty of history in the World Cup, with Argentina beating the Netherlands in the final in 1978 and in the semifinals in 2014.

MOROCCO vs. PORTUGAL

Portugal has shown what it can do without Ronaldo after the five-time Ballon d'Or winner was benched in the 6-1 rout of Switzerland in the round of 16.

His replacement, Goncalo Ramos, scored the first hat trick of this year's World Cup.

It's not clear if Ronaldo will be recalled for the quarterfinal match against Morocco or if he will be asked to accept a reduced role.

"I will use what I believe is the right strategy, as I have done my entire life," Portugal coach Fernando Santos said.

That doesn't bode well for Ronaldo, given the fluidity the team showed against Switzerland without him on the field.

Standing in Portugal's way is the surprise team of the World Cup, Morocco.

"No one is giving up. Everyone's playing with bandages, everyone is trying to raise their level of play and mentality," Regragui said. "We succeeded in creating a family, and we feel there's a whole country behind us."

ENGLAND vs. FRANCE

Two of the best strikers in the world go head-to-head in the last of the four quarterfinal matches.

Harry Kane, the leading scorer at the last World Cup, finally got off the mark in England's 3-0 win over Senegal. But he has some catching to do if he wants to get close to Mbappe, who has scored five goals in the tournament.

"I think we still have not seen the best of Kylian," France forward Olivier Giroud said of his teammate. "I hope (his best) is going to come soon and he will beat all the records. He is amazing and he is still young, which is scary because he still can improve his game."

England has been getting its goals from a variety of places. Eight different England players have scored for the team in Qatar so far.

"They," England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford said, "have got to be worried about us as well, our threat in attack."

IT&E, AK-Toyota to dispute MIBL crown

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Will AK-Toyota zoom ahead or will IT&E make a successful connection in the championship of the Inaugural IT&E MIBL Fantasy Draft Tournament set tonight at the Agape Gymnasium?

AK-Toyota and IT&E advanced to the championship of the short tourney after topping their respective brackets. The former was No. 1 in bracket B with a 4-0 win-loss card, while the later was No. 1 in Group A with a 3-1 record.

AK-Toyota's finals appearance, however, wasn't secured until the car dealership overcame a spirited stand by La Mesa Kitchen to win overtime, 70-66, in the first game last Saturday.

Due to an inferior quotient, La Mesa had to beat AK-Toyota by 12 points and it appeared the Mexican-Filipino restaurant had a chance to pull it off as it led most of the game.

MARK RABAGO

AK-Toyota's Shane Deleon Guerrero drives hard to the basket against La Mesa Kitchen in their game in the Inaugural IT&E MIBL Fantasy Draft Tournament last Saturday at the Agape Gymnasium.

AK-Toyota somehow narrowed the gap and forced overtime when it didn't have to when Shane Deleon Guerrero converted a layup in the last seconds to make it 61-all.

Realizing they'd advance to the finals even if they lose by 2 points, AK-Toyota quickly fouled Mac Mintac in the following La Mesa posession.

Knowing that they still have a shot to win by 12 in overtime, the high-flying forward intentionally missed both freebies as the match went into extension.

In the 3-minute extra period (tourney rules), AK-Toyota quickly made the end of the game anticlimactic as they didn't allow La Mesa to lead and they eventually won by 4 points.

Deleon Guerrero shone all game long to finish with 33 points, while D.J. Ong had his best game in the tourney with 21 points.

In the second game, Eats Easy nipped IT&E, 76-75, in a no-bearing game as the telecommunications company was already assured a finals berth after starting 3-l.

Greg Deleon Guerreo paced Eats Easy in their swan song with 24 points, while Airson Atan fired 18 and Preston Basa 17 in the loss.

The six-team tourney also saw Aqua Resort Club (1-4) and Latte Built (0-4) participate, while Eats Easy and La Mesa wound up with indentical 2-2 records each.

First Game

AK-Toyota 70 – Deleon Guerrero 33, Directo 10, Ferrer 10, Velasco 6, Camacho 4, Javier 4.

La Mesa 66 – Ong 21, Mintac 16, Cruz 11, Natividad 9, Sapo 3, Galang 3, Reyes 3.

Scoring by quarters: 21-18, 27-29, 47-44, 61-61, 70-66.

Second Game

Eats Easy 76 – Deleon Guerrero 24, Ferrari 20, Darag 14, Macaraig 12, Sablan 10, Albert 3.

IT&E 75 – Atan 18, Basa 17, Pastrana 15, Fitial 9, Santos 9, Capalad 6, Sumor 2.

Scoring by quarters: 12-22, 26-32, 52-56, 76-75.

Dolphins vs Mantas in HS soccer finals

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marianas High School's Brian Lubao, center, completed a hat-trick against Saipan International School in the semifinals of the NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Soccer League last Wednesday at the Northern Mariana Islands Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

By LEIGH GASES
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CORRESPONDENT

The Marianas High School Dolphins and Saipan Southern High School Manta Rays boys varsity soccer teams will go head-to-head in the finals after beating their respective foes in the semifinals of the NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Soccer League last Wednesday at the Northern Mariana Islands Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Top seed Dolphins flew through fourth-ranked Mount Carmel School Knights, 6-1, while the third-ranked Mantas blanked second seed Saipan International School Geckos, 3-0.

The Dolphins' Leland Deleon Guerrero kick-started the game when he broke through the Knights' line of defense in the 10th minute for the first goal. Teammate Cody Shimizu followed up nine minutes later, with Jerald Aquino adding the third goal.

The Knights had yet to score going into the second half but then, in the 38th minute, Leo Naraja scored the lone goal for the Knights. However, Dolphin Brian Lubao completed the hat-trick right after for the final score of 6-1.

In the game against the Mantas and the Geckos, the Mantas' Ron Patricio scored the first goal in the seventh minute. That was the extent of the damage done in the first half by both teams as they scampered for the goal but to no avail. Then in the second half, the silence was broken by Jonne Navarro and Simon Tang as they contributed the Mantas' two final goals.

The finals is scheduled for next Tuesday, Dec. 13 at 5:30pm, while the bronze medal game is scheduled for 4pm.

Only 1 undefeated team left in boys 18

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Leo Naraja completed a 3-point play in the dying seconds to help Gualo Rai escape fellow undefeated team Tanapag, 60-58, in the boys 18 of the 2022 Marianas Village Pride Basketball League last Saturday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium in Gualo Rai.

Tanapag stormed back from as much as a 12-point deficit in the second half and took a 57-52 lead on a triple and a kamikaze layup by Johnkae Raquepo time down to 1:29 in the match.

Naraja made a clutch triple on the next play and after Tanapag's Frankie Satur bungled a reverse layup, Craig Padayao was fouled with 38.2 second left and made 1-2 from the stripe to trim Tanapag's lead to 57-56.

Tanapag would again fumble the ball in their next possession and Naraja was clobbered making a successful drive to the basket for a potential and-1 play.

The Gualo Rai sharpshooter and CNMI national player would sink the bonus charity to give his team a 59-57 lead with 14.5 second left.

Tanapag had many chances to equalize with the last one coming when Satur was fouled with 2.2 seconds remaining. The 6'3" center missed his first free throw before swishing the second to cut Gualo Rai's lead to 59-58.

Lucio Aldan was fouled by Tanapag after the inbound and the point guard made 1-2 free throws before time eventually ran out for Tanapag to even attempt a hail mary.

Gualo Rai was comfortably ahead at the start of the second half until a 6-0 run by Tanapag cut the deficit to 47-40 with 7:30 to go in the ballgame.

Another 6-0 run capped by a putback from Norbet Hocog made it 47-46 with a little over 5 minutes left in the match. Gualo Rai continued to pace Tanapag until that late burst by Raquepo eventually gave his team the lead.

But Naraja and company proved resilient and made a comeback of their own to post their fourth win in as many games, while dealing Tanapag its lone loss against three wins.

Aldan led Gualo Rai with 13 points, while Naraja chipped in 11 of his own. Gino Rasg paced Tanapag in the loss with 18 with Raquepo adding 11 in support.

MARK RABAGO

Gualo Rai's Elijah Garcia goes up against a phalanx of Tanapag defenders in their boys 18 division match in the 2022 Marianas Village Pride Basketball League last Saturday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium.

Earlier in the boys 13, Kagman kept its unblemished record with a 33-21 win over Tanapag. Igane Camacho led Kagman to its fourth win in as many games with 12 points, while the 5 markers of Dane Tibayan topped Tanapag, which absorbed its second loss in six games.

In the women's division, Kaitlyn Chavez sizzled for 31 points to finally give San Antonio its first win with a 61-53 victory over San Jose. Both teams entered their matchup winless, but San Antonio now carries a 1-3 card with San Jose, which was led by the 27 points of Friendly Pena, remaining in the cellar at 0-5.

On Sunday, Oleai leveled its record to 3-3 while keeping Garapan winless after six games, 61-26, in the boys 13. Theo Joab fired 24 in the win, while the 9 points of Leon Galarse spearheaded Garapan.

San Vicente improved to 4-1 in the women's division after nipping Kagman, 39-34. Destiny Pangelinan again shot the lights out for San Vicente with 16 points, while Kaia Travilla poured in 11 in the loss for the now 3-2 Kagman.

In the boys 18, Airson Atan submitted a 30-piece to lead Koblerville to a 68-59 triumph over San Antonio. It was the third win in four games for Atan and company, while San Antonio, which was led by the 11 of Christian Lucero, dropped to 1-2.

Gualo Rai 60 – Aldan 13, Naraja 11, Sasamoto 8, Padayao 7, Garcia 6, Camacho 6, Seth 4, Cepeda 2, Peters 2, Hernandez 1.

Tanapag 58 – Rasg 18, Raquepo 11, Satur 8, Toves 8, Hocog 4, Guilas 4, Asauo 3, Abendan 2.

Scoring by halves: 25-18, 60-58.

NBA-leading Celtics embarrass sloppy Suns in blowout

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IT&E, AK-Toyota to dispute MIBL crown

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Isaiah: From 'naughty' to national swimmer

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

At only 16 years old, Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan coach Hiroyuki Kimura says Isaiah Aleksenko is the highest level athlete in CNMI sports history.

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At 3 years old Isaiah Aleksenko wasn't allowed to join a swim team because of his apparent naughtiness.

Thirteen years later, the Marianas High School junior is now part of the CNMI national swimming team bound for the 2022 FINA World Championships in Melbourne, Australia.

Aleksenko, who won two gold medals and a bronze en route to taking home the MVP award in the 2018 Tokyo Junior Sprint in Japan, said he loved the water from the onset.

"Ever since I was little I loved swimming. I would ask to go to the beach every time we had the chance and go swim there. My mom saw that I loved swimming and so she made me join a swimming team."

Yulia Aleksenko's first attempt at enrolling little Isaiah didn't turn out well though, as the tot allegedly was too unruly for the swimming coach's patience.

Thankfully a year later, Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan took him in.

"Actually, he was kicked out of another club and came to my club when he was 4 years old. The reason was that he was too unruly and was hard to handle. Even after coming to our club, it was very difficult to handle him, but I and Yuko (Tsunami Saipan manager) could see through him and found him to be a very sweet and honest child," said Tsunami Saipan coach Hiroyuki Kimura.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan coach Hiroyuki Kimura, left, instructs a 7-year-old Isaiah Aleksenko.

Now, Aleksenko is every coach's dream swimmer and Kimura couldn't stop praising his protege's abilities in

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Nicky and Nick win men's doubles

LEIGH GASES.

Majority of the winners from the three-day pickleball tournament hosted by the Pickleball Federation of the Northern Mariana Islands pose for a photo with their medals on the pickleball courts at the American Memorial Park last Sunday.

By LEIGH GASES
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CORRESPONDENT

One could say it was the "real dill" as pickleballs flew to-and-fro throughout the three day Pickleball Federation of the Northern Mariana Islands pickleball tournament that occupied the courts at the American Memorial Park, with gold and silver medals given to the winners of nine different divisions last Sunday night.

The tournament began Friday evening, Dec. 2, and lasted into the late night hours of Sunday, Dec. 4, ending with the most exciting game of the tournament—the 4.5 men's doubles division game between Nicky Nichols and Nick Martindale versus Donn Dunlop and Guam's Derek Alcorn. It was a match made in heaven as both Nicks nicked the championship medals away from both D's, 15-8, in the playoff set of the finals.

Martindale and Nichols were undefeated throughout the tournament and faced off with Dunlop and Alcorn who made their way to the finals from the loser's bracket. In the championship game, Martindale and Nichols won the first set, lost the second and

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World Cup Viewer's Guide: Quarterfinalists bid for title

By JAMES ROBSON
AP SOCCER WRITER

DOHA, Qatar (AP)—After nonstop soccer for the past two weeks, the World Cup is taking a small break.

There will be two days of rest before the quarterfinals start in Qatar with at least one surprising team still in contention to win soccer's biggest prize.

Morocco produced the latest upset in a tournament that

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AP

Denzel Dumfries of the Netherlands, bottom, is congratulated after scoring his side's 3rd goal during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between the Netherlands and the United States, at the Khalifa International Stadium in Doha, Qatar, Saturday, Dec. 3, 2022.